

JPRS-UMA-84-073

28 November 1984

# USSR Report

MILITARY AFFAIRS

MILITARY HISTORY JOURNAL

No. 7, July 1984

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28 November 1984

# USSR REPORT

## MILITARY AFFAIRS

### MILITARY HISTORY JOURNAL

No 7, July 1984

Except where indicated otherwise in the table of contents the following is a complete translation of the Russian-language monthly journal VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL.

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## ROLE OF SECTOR HIGH COMMANDS AT START OF WORLD WAR II REVIEWED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 7, Jul 8. (signed to press 21 Jun 84) pp 11-19

[Article by Maj Gen V. Gurkin: "Certain Questions From the Experience of Establishing and Operating Troop High Commands of the Sectors in the First Period of the Great Patriotic War"]

[Text] In the military history works and publications as well as in the military memoir literature, a good deal of attention has been given to the high commands of the sectors operating on the Soviet-German Front during the years of the Great Patriotic War. However, these have touched chiefly on general questions. The present article takes up certain factual data related to the establishing and functioning of the troop high commands of the sectors during the first period of the war.

According to the prewar views, it was felt that with the start of military operations, the Armed Forces would be headed by a High Command led by the people's commissar of defense and to whom the fronts and fleets would be directly subordinate.

At the start of the Great Patriotic War, due to the situation which developed unfavorably for the Soviet Army, the assault groupings of Nazi troops succeeded in the main sectors of penetrating deep into our territory. Command, control and communications in the fronts and armies were disrupted by enemy air strikes, by the actions of mobile units and by diversionary groups. Communications also on the level of Headquarters (General Staff)--front was also unstable. It was very difficult to control the operational troops over the enormous front (from the Barents Sea to the Black Sea) directly from Headquarters.

Under these conditions, the State Defense Committee [GKO] in the aim of bringing strategic leadership closer to the fronts, on 10 July approved a decree for establishing high commands for the troops of the Northwestern, Western and Southwestern Sectors and this was a compelled measure. It was assumed that the establishing of this element would facilitate leadership over military operations and make it easier for Hq SHC [Headquarters Supreme High Command] to organize cooperation between the fronts on the basic strategic sectors.

As is seen from the table, nationally known military leaders were appointed as the commanders-in-chief of the sectors while prominent party and state officials were appointed members of the military council.

Table

## Periods of Activity and Leadership of High Commands of Sectors in 1941-1942

No	Name of Sectors and Periods of Their Existence	Leadership		
		Commander-in-Chief	Military Council Member	Chief of Staff
1	Northwest 10 Jul-29 Aug 41	Mar SU K. Ye. Voroshilov	Secretary and member of Politburo of VKP(b)* Central Committee A. A. Zhdanov	Maj Gen M. V. Zakharov; from 4 Aug 41, Maj Gen A. S. Tsvetkov; from 29 Aug 41, Lt Gen M. M. Popov
2	Western 10 Jul-10 Sep 41 1 Feb-5 May 42	Mar SU S. K. Timoshenko  Army Gen G. K. Zhukov	Lt Gen N. A. Bulganin  Lt Gen N. A. Bulganin	Lt Gen G. K. Malandin; from 21 Jul 41, Mar SU B. M. Shaposhnikov; from 30 Jul 41, Lt Gen V. D. Sokolovskiy
3	Southwestern 10 Jul 41-21 Jun 42	Mar SU S. M. Budennyy; from 13 Sep 41, Mar SU S. K. Timoshenko	Secretary of the KP(b)U** Central Committee and member of Politburo of VKP(b)* Central Committee N. S. Khrushchev	Maj Gen A. P. Pokrovskiy; from 16 Oct 41, Maj Gen, from 11 Nov 41, Lt Gen P. I. Bodin; from 28 Dec 41, Lt Gen I. Kh. Bagramyan
4	Northern Caucasus 21 Apr-19 May 42	Mar SU S. M. Budennyy	Secretary of Krasnodar Kraykom of VKP(b)* P. I. Seleznev	Maj Gen G. F. Zakharov

\* VKP(b)--All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik);

\*\* KP(b)U--Ukrainian Communist Party (Bolshevik).

The field headquarters and staff of the commanders-in-chief of the sectors were organized hurriedly with a lack of experience in establishing such bodies. The command personnel basically arrived from the central staff of the NKO [People's Commissariat of Defense], the staffs of the fronts and military districts while the political personnel came from the party obkoms (gorkoms) and the reserve of the Red Army political personnel. There was a number of particular features in establishing the personnel of the high commands. Thus, traveling with Mar SU K. Ye. Voroshilov who was appointed commander-in-chief of the Northwestern Sector, on 11 July, from Moscow by special train to Leningrad, were the chief of staff, Maj Gen M. V. Zakharov, and a small group of officers from the staff and service subunits. The remaining personnel of the field headquarters of the high command arrived later.

Mar SU S. M. Budennyi was appointed commander-in-chief of the Southwestern Sector from the position of commander of the 21st Army of the Western Front the staff of which was located in Gomel. He used the staff officers from this army to man his organization. By 12 July, the chief of staff of the Southwestern Sector, Maj Gen A. P. Pokrovskiy, had available just nine operations officers headed by Gen A. I. Shtromberg, as well as three scouts, five signalmen, five code clerks and three rear officers.<sup>1</sup>

Mar SU S. K. Timoshenko at the moment of being appointed as the commander-in-chief of the Western Sector was the commander of the Western Front and at the start of his activities relied on the front's staff. His orders to the troops and reports to Headquarters up to 16 July went out over the signature of the commander of the front.<sup>2</sup>

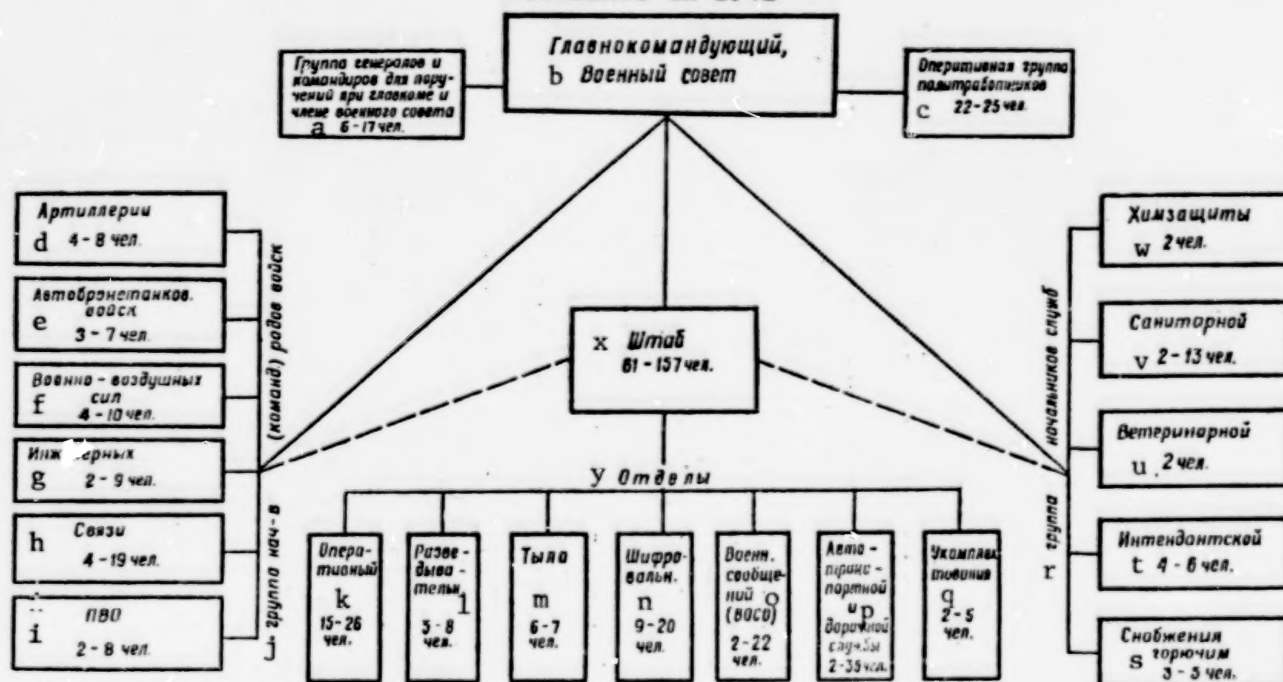
The tables of establishment [TOE] for the field headquarters of the commanders-in-chief were worked out by the commanders-in-chief themselves and approved by the General Staff. For this reason their organization (see the diagram) had certain distinguishing features.

On 20 July 1941, by a directive of the Deputy People's Commissar of Defense, Army Gen G. K. Zhukov, the TOE was approved for the personnel of the commander-in-chief of the Western Sector. This made provision for 110 men of command and supervisory personnel, including 2 marshals and 40 generals.<sup>3</sup> The TOE for the field headquarters of the commander-in-chief of the Northwestern Sector was put into effect on 2 August with 190 men (171 servicemen and 19 volunteers), while the TOE for the field headquarters of the commander-in-chief of the Southwestern Sector was introduced on 16 August with 215 men, including 202 servicemen and 13 volunteers. Subsequently, the TOE size of the field headquarters changed somewhat.

The high commands of the sectors were entrusted with the task of operational-strategic leadership over the troops of the fronts and the naval forces operating in these sectors.

*The High Command of the Northwestern Sector* coordinated the troop actions of the Northern and Northwestern Fronts as well as the forces of the Baltic and Northern Fleets. On 12-15 July, K. Ye. Voroshilov and A. A. Zhdanov studied the situation. They traveled out to the main sectors of the fronts and to the Baltic Fleet. On 16 July, the first session was held of the sector's military

**Organizational Diagram for Field Headquarters of Sector High Commands in 1941**



- Notes: 1) There were operations groups of political workers only in the Northwestern and Southwestern sectors;
- 2) On the staff of the Western Sector High Command, instead of operations and intelligence sections, there was an operations group; there was no staffing section.
- 3) Under the high command headquarters, there were to be the service subunits: security battalion, signals battalion (regiment), motor vehicle and motorcycle regiments and an administrative platoon.

Key: a--group of generals and commanders for assignments under commander-in-chief and military council member; b--commander-in-chief, military council; c--operations group of political workers; d--artillery; e--armored troops; f--air forces; g--engineer; h--signals; i--air defense; j--group of chiefs (commanders) of branches of troops; k--operations; l--intelligence; m--rear services; n--cipher; o--military communications (VOSO); p--motor-tractor and road service; q--staffing; r--group of chiefs of services; s--fuel supply; t--intendant [quartermaster]; u--veterinary; v--health; w--chemical warfare; x--staff; y--sections; чел.--persons.

council. It reviewed the course of combat operations of the troops on the Northwestern Front, it approved the dates for completing fortification works on the Luga River and outlined measures to increase the activities of the Baltic Front and to organize people's militia divisions. The second session of the military council (18 July) was devoted to reviewing the questions related to strengthening the Luga Defensive Line and reinforcing the formations defending it with more personnel and materiel. A decision was adopted to organize one other rifle division from the Leningraders and two naval rifle brigades from the sailors of the Baltic Front.<sup>4</sup>

The sector's military council gave constant attention to national economic questions and to organizing the partisan movement. Thus, by a joint decision of the sector's military council and the Leningrad Party Obkom of 25 July 1941, a special commission was set up to organize defensive works under the chairmanship of the secretary of the party gorkom A. A. Kuznetsov. As a result of the effective work done by the sector's military council and the Leningrad party organization, the city's industry in a short period of time organized the production of the necessary rocket launchers for the front as well as the ammunition for these.<sup>5</sup> On 8 August, for leadership over the partisan movement, by a decree of the military council, special representatives were appointed: the Div Commissar L. G. Tumanyan, for the Northwestern Front and Col Kh. D. Mamsurov for the Northern Front.<sup>6</sup>

Under the leadership of the Air Forces commander of the Northwestern Sector, Gen A. A. Novikov, centralized employment was organized for the aviation of the Northern and Northwestern Fronts, the Baltic Fleet and the VII Air Defense Fighter Corps in the interests of the main missions of the fronts. This was a new form for commanding and controlling the Air Forces during the first period of the war. And this produced positive results. In 22 days of combat on the distant approaches to Leningrad, 16,567 aircraft sorties were made and significant damage was caused to the enemy.<sup>7</sup>

For aiding the troops of the Northern Front defending Leningrad, the commander-in-chief and his staff in mid-August organized and carried out a counterstrike with the forces of the 11th and 34th Armies from the Northwestern Front. By the end of 14 August, the troops of these armies had advanced 60 km and were threatening the rear of the enemy assault grouping advancing on the city. This somewhat eased the situation of the Leningraders. From this time on, responsibility for the defense of Leningrad was put by Headquarters on the high command of the sector. On 22 August, the sector's staff worked out a plan for the defense of the city which was then submitted to Headquarters and approved by it on 23 August.<sup>8</sup> At the same time Headquarters split the Northern Front into two with the Leningrad (23d, 8th and 48th Armies) and Karelian Fronts (14th and 7th Armies), and the latter was directly put under Headquarters while the Northern Fleet was under the command of the Karelian Front.<sup>9</sup>

On 29 August, the GKO approved a decree on uniting the High Command of the Northwestern Sector with the command of the Leningrad Front. The Northwestern Front was put directly under Headquarters and the Baltic Fleet under the Leningrad Front. Mar K. Ye. Voroshilov was appointed commander of the Leningrad Front while the former commander of this front, Lt Gen M. M. Popov, became chief of staff of the front.<sup>10</sup> On 4 September 1941, the field headquarters of the Northwestern Sector was broken up.

*The High Command of the Western Sector* initially directed the actions of the Western Front and the Pinsk Naval Flotilla. Subsequently, the Reserve Army Front (from 14 through 25 July 1941) and the Central Front (from 24 through 29 July 1941) were under it.

On 19 July, in accord with an order of Headquarters, Mar SU B. M. Shaposhnikov was appointed the chief of staff of the commander-in-chief of the Western Sector while Lt Gen A. I. Yeremenko became commander of the Western Front. From this

date, the functions of the High Command of the Western Sector and the command of the Western Front were somewhat delimited, however the task which they carried out remained the same, that is, the defense of Smolensk. Thus, during the third 10 days of July, in the aim of defeating the enemy assault grouping on the Smolensk sector, the commander-in-chief of the sector organized the carrying out of a series of counterstrikes. Four operational groups were organized from formations of the 24th, 28th, 29th and 30th Armies and these were to attack from the north, east and south in a pincer movement against Smolensk. The troops of the 16th Army fighting directly at Smolensk were to cooperate with them. Virtually all the aviation formations of the Western and Reserve Fronts and a portion of the long-range bomber forces were used to support the advancing troops. The air operations were under the command of the Air Forces Commander of the Western Front, Col N. F. Naumenko.

The sector's military council systematically informed Headquarters and the General Staff on the state of affairs and the course of combat operations. In its work a good deal of attention was given to the questions of organizing the partisan movement and logistical support for the troops. On 2 August 1941, the military council reviewed the question of shortcomings in the work of the military highway No 1 (Vyazma--Smolensk) and outlined specific measures to eliminate these.<sup>11</sup>

On 29 July 1941, the GKO considered it necessary to unite the troops of the Western Front with the troops of the High Command of the Western Sector into the single Western Front while the Deputy People's Commissar of Defense, Mar SU S. K. Timoshenko was appointed simultaneously the commander-in-chief of the Western Sector and the commander of the Western Front. The Central Front was directly under Hq SHC. The reserve armies of the Vyazma--Rzhev line on 30 July were renamed the Reserve Front with the Deputy People's Commissar of Defense, Army Gen G. K. Zhukov being appointed the commander of this front. The men and equipment from the staff of the Western Sector were used to organize the staff of the Reserve Front.<sup>12</sup>

With the completion of the Smolensk Engagement, the situation on the central sector of the Soviet-German Front was somewhat stabilized. On 11 September, Mar SU S. K. Timoshenko was appointed the commander-in-chief of the Southwestern Sector while Col Gen I. S. Konev became the commander of the Western Front.<sup>13</sup> From this time, the High Command of the Western Sector, as a body of strategic leadership, ceased its activities. However, according to the Directive of Hq SHC of 1 February 1942, it was to be restored. This was brought about by the common tasks of the Western and Kalinin Fronts and by the necessity of the closest cooperation between them. Army Gen G. K. Zhukov was appointed commander-in-chief of the Western Sector while keeping the position of commander of the Western Front.<sup>14</sup>

On 19 February 1942, the TOE was approved for the staff of the Western Sector. The staff consisted of sections (operations, intelligence and air forces) and numbered 37 men (34 servicemen and 3 volunteers).<sup>15</sup>

The High Command of the Western Sector played a definite role in organizing co-operation and control, however it did not succeed in fully carrying out the tasks confronting the Kalinin and Western Fronts. By a directive of Hq SHC of

3 May 1942, the sector was eliminated and the Kalinin Front from 1200 hours on 5 May was put directly under Hq SHC.<sup>16</sup>

*The High Command of the Southwestern Sector* led the troops of the Southwestern and Southern Fronts while the Black Sea Fleet and the Dnepr detachment of ships from the Pinsk Naval Flotilla were under it in operational terms.

By mid-July the most dangerous situation had developed on the approaches to Kiev in the area of the Southwestern Front. The commander-in-chief and his staff took the necessary measures to eliminate the threat hanging over the city. The energetic actions of troops from the 5th and 26th Armies had a substantial impact on improving the situation around Kiev. The Nazi troops suffered significant losses and their rate of advance dropped.

In July-August, the military council of the sector initiated work to establish underground party obkoms (gorkoms) and raykoms in the rayons threatened by occupation.

On 19 August, Headquarters gave the troops of the Southwestern Sector the mission: by stubborn defense along the Dnepr from Loyev to Tsyurupinsk to cover the Left Bank Ukraine and the Donets Basin from land and air, strongly holding onto the Kiev and Dnepropetrovsk bridgeheads on the right bank.<sup>17</sup> The basic efforts of the military council and the staff of the high command were concentrated on carrying out this task.

It should be pointed out that in a number of instances, Headquarters endeavored to direct the actions of the fronts, bypassing the apparatus of the commander-in-chief of the sector. As a result, the commanders of the fronts, before carrying out the orders of Headquarters, informed the commander-in-chief and, conversely, having received orders or a directive from the commander-in-chief and his staff, referred to Headquarters for their confirmation. All of this led to a loss of precious time, it created additional difficulties in troop leadership and told negatively on their actions. The sector's high command did not have reserves available and for this reason was unable to substantially influence the course of combat operations. The commander-in-chief was forced to turn to Headquarters even for permission to use the reserve formations which were in the area of the sector.

In line with the complicating of the situation on the southern wing of the Soviet-German Front, at the end of August and the start of September 1941, the question arose at Hq SHC of merging the command of the Southwestern Sector with the command of the Southern Front. However, Mar SU S. M. Budennyi considered this measure premature.<sup>18</sup> The directives of Headquarters on the given question did not follow and the high command of the sector continued operating at the former strength.

By 11 September, a difficult situation had arisen in the area of the Southwestern Front. Its troops were under the threat of encirclement. The commander-in-chief of the Southwestern Sector and the command of the Southwestern Front felt that under the existing situations it was essential to pull back the troops from the Kiev salient to a line of the Psel River. But the Supreme Commander-in-Chief demanded: "...Kiev is not to be abandoned and the bridges are not to

be blown up without permission from Headquarters...."<sup>19</sup> At this time the commander-in-chief were changed. Mar S. M. Budennyi was relieved from the position held while Mar S. K. Timoshenko was appointed the commander-in-chief of the Southwestern Sector. The Southwestern Front was reinforced with two tank brigades and one rifle division.

On 15 September, the enemy succeeded in closing the ring around the troops of the Southwestern Front. Actions to relieve them were unsuccessful. However, due to the energetic measures undertaken by the High Command of the Southwestern Sector, with the forces of the 40th, 21st and 38th Armies as well as the reserves which had been brought up, it was possible to restore the Southwestern Front the troops of which by the end of September 1941 had taken up the defensive on a line of Belopolye, Lebedin, Krasnograd.

On 26 September, Mar S. K. Timoshenko was appointed the commander of the Southwestern Front while the Southern Front was transferred directly to Hq SHC.<sup>20</sup> The personnel from the staff of the commander-in-chief of the sector was used to rebuild the field headquarters of the Southwestern Front.

Thus, the organization of the commander-in-chief of the Southwestern Sector was actually disbanded. However, the command itself was not abolished but rather unified with the command of the Southwestern Front. Thus, already by 15 October, Hq SHC issued the directives to put the Southern Front, the Kharkov and a portion of the forces of the Northern Caucasus Military Districts under the Commander-in-Chief of the Southwestern Sector.<sup>21</sup> Subsequently, all orders from headquarters to the fronts fighting in the area of the Southwestern Sector, including the Bryansk, were regularly forwarded in copies to Mar S. K. Timoshenko. In November-December 1941, the troops of the Southern and Southwestern Fronts according to a plan and under the leadership of the commander-in-chief of the Southwestern Sector carried out the successful offensive operations (Rostov and Yelets). The experience of conducting these operations showed that for ensuring dependable command over the sector's troops in offensive operations it was essential to have an independent organization for the high command.

Proceeding from this, the military council of the Southwestern Sector on 16 December forwarded to Hq SHC a report which requested the release of the commander-in-chief from the command of any one front, in the given instance, the Southwestern, as this would make it possible for him to be concerned with resolving the main questions which they arose according to the situation. For command of the fronts it was proposed that the establishing of a large staff be abandoned, leaving the functions of supply completely to the fronts while only a small operations group would be created for the sector's military council consisting of an operations, intelligence and cipher sections and a signals section through which the actions of the fronts would be coordinated. The carrying out of these measures would make it possible for the commander-in-chief to move freely from one point to another within the entire Southwestern Sector and personally provide leadership on the spot.<sup>22</sup>

On 18 December, Hq SHC considered these proposals and thereby marked a beginning to reorganizing the organization of the high command of the Southwestern Sector.<sup>23</sup> On 5 January 1942, the TMC was approved for the field headquarters and this was to be named based on the staff of the Southwestern Front.

Subsequently, certain adjustments were made in the TOE of the high command headquarters. In particular, there were plans to combine two positions on the staff of the high command and the staff of the Southwestern Front (chief of staff, chiefs of the branches of troops and services).

On 21 June 1942, as a consequence of the unsuccessful outcome of the Kharkov Battle, the Southwestern Sector was eliminated. Leadership over the troops of the Southwestern and Southern Fronts was assumed by Headquarters. The personnel of the field headquarters of the commander-in-chief went to reinforce the mentioned fronts.<sup>24</sup>

*The High Command of the Northern Caucasus Sector* was established in April 1942 in the aim of coordinating the actions of the troops and forces fighting in the Crimea, on the Caucasus Coast and on the Black Sea. It was to direct actions of the troops from the Crimean Front, the Sevastopol Defensive Area and the Northern Caucasus Military District. The Black Sea Fleet and Azov Naval Flotilla were under it in operational terms.<sup>25</sup> In line with the unsuccessful actions of our troops in the Crimea and the breaking up of the Crimean Front, the Northern Caucasus Sector was a superfluous element and on 19 May was united with the Northern Caucasus Front.<sup>26</sup>

During the first period of the Great Patriotic War, the activities of the high commands of the sectors were of positive significance. However, they did not play that role which was assigned to them. This is explained by a number of factors. The basic one, in our view, is that the commanders-in-chief of the sectors did not have the necessary reserves available to them and as a consequence of this were unable to have an active influence on the course of combat operations by the troops of the subordinate fronts. The functions of the commanders-in-chief of the sectors and their command bodies were poorly defined.

In addition to this, it is essential to bear in mind that the activities of the high commands of the strategic sectors were occurring under difficult conditions, when strategic initiative was in enemy hands, the commanders and staffs of the formations did not have sufficient experience in conducting combat operations, the troops were experiencing great difficulties in logistical support and they were short on combat equipment, weapons, ammunition and fuel.

However, Hq SHC did not ultimately abandon this intermediate level of strategic leadership. Even at the end of 1941 and the beginning of 1942, the high commands of the Southwestern and Western Sectors were restored, although in a somewhat different form.

The experience acquired in organizing the strategic leadership bodies was employed at the end of the war in establishing the High Command of the Soviet Troops in the Far East.

As a whole, the experience of the initial period of the Great Patriotic War confirms the necessity of the early establishing of such a system of strategic leadership which would be capable from the outset of a war to ensure firm command over combat operations.

# FOOTNOTES

- 1 TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 251, inv. 646, file 587, sheets 26-32.
- 2 Ibid., folio 246, inv. 1525, file 1.
- 3 Ibid., folio 33, inv. 11477, file 11, sheets 132, 133.
- 4 Ibid., folio 249, inv. 1554, file 1, sheets 1-6.
- 5 "Istoriya Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny Sovetskogo Soyuza 1941-1945" [History of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union 1941-1945], Vol 2, Moscow, Voenizdat, 1961, p 85; TsAMO, folio 96-A, inv. 2011, file 5, sheet 24.
- 6 TsAMO, folio 249, inv. 1554, file 1, sheet 32.
- 7 M. N. Kozhevnikov, "Komandovaniye i Shtab VVS Sovetskoy Armii v Velikoy Otechestvennoy Voiny 1941-1945" [Command and Staff of the Soviet Army Air Forces in the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945], Moscow, Nauka, 1977, pp 49-50.
- 8 TsAMO, folio 16-A, inv. 927, file 19, sheets 47-52.
- 9 Ibid., folio 132-A, inv. 2642, file 29, sheets 63, 64.
- 10 Ibid., folio 48-A, inv. 1554, file 87, sheet 22.
- 11 Ibid., folio 246, inv. 1551, file 1, sheets 77-81, 130-132, 165-166.
- 12 Ibid., folio 208, inv. 1511, file 1, sheets 44-48.
- 13 Ibid., folio 96-A, inv. 2011, file 15, sheets 162-163.
- 14 Ibid., folio 132-A, inv. 2642, file 12, sheet 180.
- 15 Ibid., folio 7, inv. 179415, file 249, sheets 67-69.
- 16 Ibid., folio 132-A, inv. 2642, file 31, sheet 180.
- 17 Ibid., folio 29, sheets 52-55.
- 18 Ibid., folio 251, inv. 646, file 5, sheets 127-129.
- 19 Ibid., folio 96-A, inv. 2011, file 5, sheet 99.
- 20 Ibid., folio 96-A, inv. 2011, file 15, sheet 323.
- 21 Ibid., folio 132-A, inv. 2642, file 30, sheet 73.
- 22 Ibid., folio 48-A, inv. 1153, file 81, sheets 846-850.
- 23 Ibid., folio 113-A, inv. 3272, file 4, sheet 169.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., folio 132-A, inv. 2642, file 31, sheet 214.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., file 44, sheets 26-31.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., file 41, sheet 141.

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#### SPECIFIC FEATURES OF LWOV-SANDOMIERZ OPERATION REVIEWED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 7, Jul 84 (signed to press 21 Jun 84) pp 20-26

[Article by Candidate of Historical Sciences, Maj Gen A. Maryshev: "Certain Characteristic Features of the Lwow-Sandomierz Operation"]

[Text] The Lwow-Sandomierz Operation was one of the major operations of the Great Patriotic War. In the course of it the troops from 13 July through 29 August 1944 fought in an area 440 km wide and 350 km deep. They crushed the enemy strategic grouping of the Army Group Northern Ukraine, they liberated the western oblasts of the Ukraine and the southwestern areas of Poland, they crossed the Vistula, they captured a major bridgehead to the west of Sandomierz and created favorable conditions for conducting new operations in the concluding campaign of 1945. The operation on both sides involved over 2 million men, 22,400 guns and mortars, around 3,000 tanks and SAU [self-propelled artillery mounts] (assault guns) and almost 4,000 aircraft.<sup>1</sup>

In contrast to the other strategic offensive operations of 1944, the Lwow-Sandomierz Operation was carried out from the very outset by the forces of just the First Ukrainian Front (commander, Mar SU I. S. Konev) and from the beginning of August, also by the troops of the Fourth Ukrainian Front (commander, Col Gen I. Ye. Petrov) which was formed from troops on the left wing of the First Ukrainian Front.

One of the characteristic features of the operation was the simultaneous making of two powerful strikes. Due to the fact that the troops of the front had to advance in a broad area and under the conditions of rugged terrain, an attack on one sector would have allowed the enemy to maneuver its resources from other sectors and concentrate the efforts of all aviation for operations against the single attack grouping of the front.

In the developing situation, it was advisable for the front to make two strikes: the main one on the Lwow Axis and the second on the Rava-Russkaya. These attacks, in essence, were to be made on separate sectors which were almost 80 km apart.

The course of events fully affirmed the correctness of such a decision. The making of two strikes made it possible to split the Army Group Northern Ukraine,

to quickly come out on the flanks and in the rear of the major enemy grouping in the area of Brody, to surround and destroy it. This sharply reduced the stability of the enemy's entire defensive system, it deprived it of the possibility of maneuvering the men and equipment and contributed to the successful development of the offensive.

The making of the strikes on the separate sectors necessitated the creation on each of them of a strong troop grouping which would possess sufficient independence and the ability to rapidly break through the defenses and then develop the offensive at a rapid pace to a great depth without allowing the enemy to promptly organize defenses on subsequent previously prepared defensive lines in the operational depth.

The assault grouping on each sector had two all-arms armies with the mission of breaking through the defenses as well as powerful echelons for exploiting the success (on the Rava-Russkaya sector there was a tank army and a cavalry-mechanized group [KMG] and on the Lwow two tank armies and a KMG). These were also reinforced by artillery, antiaircraft artillery, separate tank, self-propelled artillery, engineer and other separate formations and units.

For air support and covering each assault grouping from the air, the 2d Air Army was split into two independent groups. The first consisting of four air corps was assigned for operations on the Rava-Russkaya sector and the second consisting of five air corps was to operate on the main, Lwow sector. Three separate air divisions were to be in the reserve of the front's commander.<sup>2</sup>

The incorporation of the all-arms and tank field forces and formations in the assault groupings, the saturating of them with a large amount of artillery, antiaircraft artillery, engineer and other formations and units, and the assigning of permanent air groupings for their support ensured the independence of the assault groupings and made it possible to successfully carry out the missions assigned them.

The Lwow-Sandomierz Operation was characterized by large-scale troop regrouping. In the course of the previous combat operations, the main forces of the front were on the left wing, that is, significantly to the south of the sectors chosen for the offensive. Under these conditions for establishing assault groupings, one-half of the front's troops had to be regrouped over a distance of 100-300 km and more, including the 38th Army, all three tank armies and four artillery divisions.

It was extremely difficult under those conditions to relocate such a mass of troops. In the first place, a large portion of them had to be moved along the front. Secondly, the German Command realized that, although the basic forces of the front were on its left wing, the chief events would develop further north, since the terrain on the Stanislaw sector was not suitable for an offensive by large forces. For this reason it carefully followed the changes in the grouping of our troops.

In order to conceal from the enemy the scale and aim of the regrouping, the front's staff together with the regrouping plan worked out a plan for surprise and deception. Both documents were reviewed and approved by the front's

military council. There were plans to conceal the true regrouping of the troops and feign the concentrating of the main efforts on the left sector of the front by a false concentration here (in the zones of the 1st Guards Army and 18th Army) of two tank and one rifle corps. For these purposes, false shipments of tanks by rail were widely planned and carried out, troop unloading areas were simulated, the routes were prepared for moving them up into the assembly areas and the jump-off areas, and the enemy was misled by the local population. For simulating preparations for a breakthrough on this area of defenses, a reconnaissance in force was carried out.

For carrying out the measures envisaged by the plan for surprise and deception, the following were assigned: 3 rifle regiments and a battalion of junior lieutenant cadets, 7 combat engineer battalions, 3 artillery battalions, an antiaircraft artillery regiment, 2 chemical warfare companies, 2 SAU batteries, a camouflage company, radio and telephone construction companies, 200 men from the defensive construction directorate, 7 loudspeakers, 2 trains (for transporting tanks) and 276 collapsible tank dummies.<sup>3</sup> For the purpose of direct leadership over these resources, 2 operations groups were organized from officers of the different branches of troops of the 1st Guards and 18th Armies. Responsibility for carrying out the measures and the coordinating of the actions of the men and equipment were entrusted to the chiefs of staffs of these armies. In each group there was a staff officer from the front. The effectiveness of the surprise and deception measures can be seen from the sharp increase in air and ground reconnaissance, by the intense shelling of the dummy areas as well as by the fact that up to 16 July the enemy did not change the size of its troop grouping in front of the 1st Guards Army, although by 5 July a large portion of the Soviet troops to be regrouped had left here for the Rava-Russkaya and Lwow sectors.

However, for a number of reasons, it was not possible to fully achieve the goal of surprise and deception, to conceal the regrouping of the large masses of troops which for a long time had been either in direct contact with the enemy or an insignificant distance away. The enemy received much information as a consequence of the flagrant violations of the camouflage measures. This was observed particularly in the rear, repair and other support units.

Of significant interest was the relocating of aviation (the 4 air corps and 2 air divisions from the 5th and 7th Air Armies) designed to reinforce the 2d Air Army. The relocating of these formations was carried out over a distance of 200-600 km by a combined method: in flight waves, by the forces of transport aviation and by rail. In the interests of achieving concealment, a portion of the air formations was concentrated at airfields 100-150 km from the front line and only a day before the offensive in small groups flew up to the forward airfields. The remaining aviation was relocated all at once to the forward airfields either on the eve of the operation or on the first day of the offensive. In the latter instance the landing at the operational airfields was made after the first combat sortie.<sup>4</sup>

Great attention was given to concealing the basing of aviation both in the preparatory period and in the course of the operation. This task was carried out chiefly by simulating false airfields the number of which was 80 percent and more of the real ones.<sup>5</sup> Flight operations of air units were simulated at false airfields equipped with simple runways.

A characteristic feature of the Lwow-Sandomierz Operation was the successive committing of the two tank armies to battle in the zone of advance of the single all-arms army. By the moment of the planned commitment of the tank armies, the 38th All-Arms Army in the zone of which the 4th Tank Army was to be committed had been unable to create the necessary conditions for this, and the 60th Army, where the 3d Guards Tank Army was to be committed, together with its forward brigades broke through the defenses in a zone up to 6 km wide and formed the "Koltov Corridor." The developing situation jeopardized the development of the offensive in the sector of the main thrust. Decisive measures were needed to increase the effort in the aim of raising the breakthrough rate. For this reason the commander of the front, regardless of the extremely difficult conditions, took a decision to commit initially the 3d Guards Tank Army through this narrow breach and then the 4th Tank Army.

In the aim of supporting the engagement of the tank armies, the 60th Army was ordered to firmly hold the flanks of the "Koltov Corridor" and for this it was reinforced with artillery. Significant air forces were assigned to neutralize the enemy in front of the start line of the tank armies and on the flanks.

In the Lwow-Sandomierz Operation greater experience was gained in encircling and eliminating a large enemy grouping. Characteristically, by the start of combat operations, the troops of the front did not hold an enveloping position as was the case at Stalingrad and in the Korsun-Shevchenkivskiy Operation. The conditions for encirclement were created in the course of the offensive after breaking through the tactical defensive zone on two distant sectors. The prompt committing of the mobile troops to the breakthrough on each sector and their rapid maneuver from the two sides toward the flanks and the rear of the Brody grouping ended with the encirclement and complete defeat of eight German divisions.

The Lwow-Sandomierz Operation was characterized by the executing of the most decisive maneuvering, particularly by the field forces and formations of the armored and mechanized troops. The broad maneuvering of the troops in the course of the operation made it possible to quickly concentrate the necessary forces on the sectors of the selected strikes and make surprise decisive attacks against the enemy. For example, having recognized the threat of encirclement for the Brody grouping, the command of the Army Group Northern Ukraine endeavored to pull it back. However, a rapid maneuver by the KMG No 1 (XXV Tank Corps and I Guards Cavalry Corps) into the rear of this grouping prevented the enemy from avoiding encirclement. Or after an unsuccessful attempt to capture Lwow by a frontal attack without a halt, the 3d Guards Tank Army broke it off, emerged in the area to the south of Yavorovo, significantly further west of Lwow, and then with a portion of the forces attacked the Lwow grouping from west to east.

The maneuvering of the 1st and 3d Guards Tank Armies from the left flank of the front from the area of Przemyśl to the right, Sandomierz sector, made it possible to cross the Vistula quickly and on a broad front and capture the Sandomierz bridgehead. The rapid maneuvering of the 4th Tank Army from the area of Sanbor to the Sandomierz bridgehead provided an opportunity unexpected for the enemy to reinforce the troops on the bridgehead and contributed to the successful repelling of its counterstrikes.

Very characteristic for the operation was the repeated shifting of efforts of the front from one sector to another. For example, when it finally became clear that on the Lwow sector the breakthrough could be carried out most successfully in the area of the 60th Army, the commander of the front decided to commit the 4th Tank Army to battle in its area behind the 3d Guards Tank Army. The prompt decision to shift efforts prevented the enemy from substantially altering the plan of operations and avoiding defeat on the Lwow sector.

Table

Conditions and Methods for the Regrouping of Tank Armies  
in the First Ukrainian Front

Armies	Depth of regrouping, km		Daily move, km	Time on move in day	Speed km/hr	Time of regrouping	Composition of columns (depth)
	by rail	own power					
1st Guards Tank	510-530	to 300	70-110	about 7 hrs	12-15	24-29 June	Tanks and other equipment by rail. Motor transport under own power (80-90 vehicles), length of column to 5 km
3d Guards Tank	--	60-70	--	--	--	25-30 June	Regrouping carried out as tactical exercise
4th Tank	200	90	90	about 7 hrs	to 13 (tanks)	25-29 June	Motorized infantry on foot in working out tactical subjects under conditions of a mobile camp. Tanks under own power

In the operation a significant role was played by the massing of men and weapons. Due to the transfer of the basic amount of artillery to the armies operating as the assault groupings of the front, its density on the breakthrough sectors was brought to 230 guns and mortars per km of front. For supporting the troops on the battlefield in breaking through the enemy defenses almost 100 percent of the aircraft sorties was employed and 60 percent over the period of the operation.

In the course of the Lwow-Sandomierz Operation the troops of the front had to cross a large number of major rivers including the Western Bug, Dniester, San, Vistula and others. At times the assault groupings ended up simultaneously on two rivers. The success of the crossing was achieved by a decisive increasing of effort by the advancing troops in approaching the water obstacles, by the

surprise of the reaching of the river by the forward units and by the crossing of it without a halt as well as by the careful preparations and skillful allocation of crossing and engineer equipment between the field forces and by rivers.

The experience of the crossing of the Vistula merits particular attention. For increasing the effort on the right wing, where the troops of the front had had the greatest success, the commander of the front sharply altered the direction of the assault by the 1st and 3d Guards Armies. From the area of Przemyśl they rushed toward Sandomierz and came out by surprise at the river. For overcoming the increasing enemy resistance during the period of the crossing and in the struggle to widen the bridgehead, the second echelon of the front in the form of the 5th Guards Army was committed to battle. Before approaching the river, the armies were reinforced with crossing equipment and by units and subunits of engineer troops. Thus, the 3d and 1st Guards Tank Armies were assigned two pontoon bridge parks, the 13th Army was reinforced with one while the 3d Guards Army received 1.5 of a park. For supporting the crossing, up to 30 combat engineer battalions were committed to action. In addition, each army received a detachment of military construction workers numbering 500-800 men. All of this made it possible to quickly put up the crossing equipment and successfully operate it.

The most effective and massed use of crossing gear was in the area of the 13th Army and the 1st and 3d Guards Tank Armies. In the area of Baranów, the basic portion of their crossing equipment and combat engineer battalions was concentrated in a sector of 8-12 km. In approximately 24 hours here there were operating 24 rafts including two 50-60-ton ones and nine 16-ton ones. These rafts in 24 hours transported across the Vistula the 1st and a portion of the forces of the 3d Guards Tank Armies. For those times this was a very high rate of crossing such a major river as the Vistula.

In the successful crossing of the Vistula a major role was also played by the massed use of air defenses and the prompt relocating of aviation which ensured the high intensity of its use.

The success of the Lwów-Sandomierz Operation to a significant degree was aided by the specific and differentiated preparation of the command and the troops. During the preparatory period assemblies or meetings were conducted with all categories of commanders. These analyzed the experience of the previous battles and operations and worked out recommendations for organizing the forthcoming offensive.

The commander of the front himself conducted a command-staff exercise with the commanders of the armies and corps. Here they analyzed in detail the particular features of preparing for the offensive on each sector. Marshal S. Konev visited the breakthrough area of each first echelon division, he personally inspected their readiness for the offensive and carefully instructed the divisional commanders on the questions of the forthcoming operations. He gave particular attention to coordinating the efforts of the branches of troops in carrying out their set tasks. Upon his instructions in each of the 32 regiments which were to advance in the first echelon on the breakthrough sectors, one assault battalion was organized. These were given the mission of taking the strongest reinforcements on the first (main) zone of enemy defenses.

In line with the forthcoming advance into Polish territory, great work was carried out with the personnel in the course of which chief attention was paid to the necessity of explaining to the Polish people the true, liberation mission of the Soviet Army which had rescued it from Nazi slavery, at the indoctrination of proletarian internationalism and providing help to the patriotic forces of Poland in rebuilding the destroyed economy, in democratizing life in the country and strengthening friendship and ties between the soldiers and local population.

Involved and unique work was carried out with the young soldiers inducted from the liberated frontline areas among which Bandera followers were active. The specific features of the work consisted chiefly in discovering and overcoming the unhealthy attitudes among certain servicemen of this category who for a long time had been exposed to the influence of Nazi ideology.

The Communist Party and the Soviet government had due praise for the skill, heroism and valor of the troops of the First Ukrainian Front. Nine times Moscow saluted them. More than 123,000 soldiers and officers were awarded orders and medals, while 160 men received the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, including the commander of the front Mar SU I. S. Konev. Some 246 formations and units received honorary names and 353 were awarded orders.<sup>6</sup>

The carrying out of the Lwow-Sandomierz Operation was a major contribution to the theory and practice of Soviet military art and provided much that was instructive and valuable in the area of preparing and conducting a strategic offensive operation by the forces of one front. The experience gained in the operation by the command, staffs and troops has largely maintained its validity at present.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [History of World War II of 1939-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 9, 1978, pp 81, 94.

<sup>2</sup> "Operatsii Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne 1941-1945" [Operations of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 3, 1958, p 391.

<sup>3</sup> V. A. Matsulenko, "Operativnaya maskirovka voysk" [Surprise and Deception of Troops], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1975, pp 109, 113.

<sup>4</sup> I. V. Timokhovich, "Operativnoye iskusstvo Sovetskikh VVS v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne" [Operational Art of the Soviet Air Forces in the Great Patriotic War], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1976, p 119, 120.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p 118.

<sup>6</sup> TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 33, inv. 793756, file 2, sheet 53.

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CSO: 1801/386

## IMPROVEMENTS IN NAVAL TRAINING IN WORLD WAR II EXAMINED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 7, Jul 84 (signed to press 21 Jun 84) pp 27-35

[Article by Flt Adm V. Chernavin, chief of the Main Naval Staff: "Operational and Combat Training in the Navy on the Eve and During the Years of the Great Patriotic War (From the Experience of the Main Naval Staff)"]

[Text] The content of operational and combat training in the Navy on the eve of the war was determined by the nature of the tasks confronting it. The guidance documents of those times pointed out that the Navy, as a component part of the USSR Armed Forces, for achieving the set operational tasks should be ready for active offensive operations in the open sea, in the air, along the enemy coast and at enemy bases. It was given the tasks of supporting the ground forces and air forces in their operations in coastal zones, to conduct active defense of the fortified areas and bases, to securely support its maritime shipments and disrupt the enemy lines of communications. The fleet could carry these out by conducting joint and independent operations. The former envisaged the support of the maritime flanks of the ground forces and other forces, the landing of amphibious forces and the repelling of enemy ones and the attacking of shore facilities. Among the independent operations were those to defeat enemy naval forces, to capture skerries, island areas and strong-points as well as operations against the enemy bases and shore facilities. Also considered were systematic fleet combat operations which were viewed as an important form of combat at sea. Progressive views were set out profoundly and consistently in the works of the Naval Academy, in the writings of I. S. Isakov, S. P. Stavitskiy, V. A. Belli and G. A. Stepanov as well as in many articles of the journal MORSKOY SBORNIK.

Tactical questions were worked out most completely in the theory of Soviet naval art. Enterprising, nonroutine actions and creative and intelligent command of the ships, units and formations were required. "In combat operations," commented on of the theoretical works of that period, "it is impossible to tolerate a slow commander, it is impossible to tolerate a commander who does not develop his military eye, it is impossible to tolerate a commander who constantly retreats before the enemy and the difficulties of the situation."<sup>1</sup>

Operational and combat training in the Navy began to be carried out on a more planned and effective basis after the establishing of the Main Naval Staff

(GMSH)<sup>2</sup> and the formation of the corresponding directorates in it. "It personally seemed to me," recalled N. G. Kuznetsov, "that primarily three bodies should be concentrated in the GMSH: operations, combat training and reconnaissance. The coordinating of their work in one body would make it possible for the People's Commissariat through the chief of the GMSH in peacetime to follow the course and level of combat training and direct the combat activities of the fleets during the period of a war. After some debate this was done and the war confirmed the correctness of such organization."<sup>3</sup>

The chiefs of the leading directorates were Vice Adm S. P. Stavitskiy, Rear Adm N. M. Kharlamov, Yu. A. Panteleyev, V. L. Bogdenko and others. Great experience, high erudition and an outstanding knowledge of naval affairs made it possible for them to carry out various tasks the basic ones being assisting the people's commissar in the command of the fleets and preparing them for war. Under the leadership of the GMSH responsible workers, exercises were conducted for command training, staff drills, operational and operational-tactical exercises on maps, fleet exercises, games and maneuvers. Their main aim was to improve the knowledge and practical skills of the admirals, generals and senior officers in the area of planning, organizing and conducting the operations and increasing the tactical skill of the commanders.

It was impossible to achieve effective training without proper logistic support for this. This forced the GMSH officers to pay a great deal of attention to allocating to the fleets the new equipment being received from industry. In addition, they took an active part in working out and adjusting the military shipbuilding program, considering here the combat experience, international situation and the needs of the ship formations.

The Communist Party and the Soviet government, in giving enormous significance to strengthening the might of the Armed Forces did everything necessary for the technical equipping of the Navy. In just the 11 months of 1940, the fleet received 100 various combat vessels, chiefly destroyers, submarines, minesweepers and torpedo boats.<sup>4</sup> Many of these were designed and built according to the last word of technology and possessed high combat qualities. Due to this by the time of the attack by Nazi Germany on the USSR, the navy had around 940 different vessels.<sup>5</sup> In addition to this, several large surface vessels, more than 40 submarines and a significant number of small ships and boats<sup>6</sup> were under construction, a total of 269 units (at the end of 1940).<sup>7</sup> During the last pre-war year, the naval aviation also was increased by 39 percent.<sup>8</sup>

The GMSH gave great attention also to supervising the organization on the spot of special and technical training for the personnel, to the recruiting and placement of officer personnel and primarily the commanders of the ships, units and formations. Here they took into account Lenin's warning on the futility of spending tens and hundreds of millions of dollars on buying and building magnificent naval vessels with the inability to use them, "in the absence of people capable of knowledgeably using the most modern improvement of military equipment."<sup>9</sup>

The intensive growth of the fleet required a rapid but careful preparation of both the command and rank-and-file personnel. Under the conditions of those times this was very difficult to achieve. "It is harder to develop and

indoctrinate able commanders and seamen," commented the former People's Commissar of the Navy N. G. Kuznetsov later, "than to build ships."<sup>10</sup> The decision of the VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)] Central Committee and the USSR SNK [Council of People's Commissars] on the new lengths of service in the Navy, on improving the status of reenlisted personnel and on the more careful recruitment of induction youth led to a situation where already in 1939 the training detachments had received around 8,000 men with a secondary education.<sup>11</sup> Selection was particularly strict for the naval schools where many young men sought admission. While in 1939 there were 4,000 applications for the 350 places in the naval engineer school, on the following year 10,100 of them were received.<sup>12</sup> In the aim of improving the training for future naval officers, upon a decision of the SNK, special schools were opened in seven cities where the students in the last three grades studied a number of naval subjects.<sup>13</sup> Workers from the GMSH participated in the compiling of the curricula for them.

The effective activities of the GMSH during the prewar period can be seen to a definite degree by a brief list of the carefully elaborated regulations, manuals and directives on various questions: combat command and control, the conducting of tactical and detachment exercises, the combat employment of naval aviation, training for individual lifesaving on submarines, navigation training, the compiling and publishing of naval navigation maps, physical training and so forth. One of the fundamental documents which generalized the views on the organizing of combat command was the "Manual on the Combat Activities of Naval Formation Staffs" introduced in mid-July 1940. In the same year, the fleets received the textbook "Metodika morskoy podgotovki" [Methods of Naval Training]. This helped improve organization and increase the effectiveness of the drills, practical exercises and training conducted on the ships not only prior to the war but also during combat operations. After republishing in 1945, in the fleet during the postwar years training was carried out according to the "Metodika morskoy podgotovki."

Of great theoretical and practical value was the "Rukovodstvo po provedeniyu takticheskikh i otryadnykh ucheniy" [Manual on Conducting Tactical and Detachment Exercises].<sup>14</sup> In introducing it, the GMSH officers in the fleets conducted preparatory, demonstration, quiz and other exercises. Here they worked out such questions as "The Defense of a Formation in a Move at Sea in Daylight Hours," "Antisubmarine Defense of a Division of Destroyers in a Move," "The Air Defense and Antichemical Defense of a Detachment of Landing Craft at Sea," "Minesweeping of a DTShch [Minesweeping Division] of an Area in Darkness Under Conditions of Counteraction by Light Enemy Forces" and so forth. Each exercise was carefully analyzed and when necessary some of them were completely or partially repeated. The generalized recommendations were then set out in the corresponding documents (instructions, manuals, proceedings and so forth) and these were sent out to the fleets for implementation.

In compiling the guidance documents, the GMSH considered the achievements of scientific thought and the situational demands. In order not to fall behind events, the staff officers endeavored to be more frequently with the fleets. Thus, during the combat operations against the White Finns, the Deputy Chief of the GMSH, Rear Adm V. A. Alafuzov was with the Baltic Fleet. His observations and conclusions were taken into account in working out the new combat training program which reoriented the commanders and staffs from "seasonal" training of

the personnel to year-round. "The first steps of the fleet in the spring were timid," recalled N. G. Kuznetsov about these times, "and it was like a patient who had spent a long time in bed.... But when the formations began to carry out the involved exercises and joint voyages, it was already mid-summer. In a rush, with the inevitable emergencies, the fleet prepared for the autumn maneuvers which ended the training year.... From the experience of the Finnish Campaign, we again were convinced that we must be at sea year-round and prepare for combat at sea under conditions close to actual combat."<sup>15</sup> An indicator of the increased intensity of combat training can be seen in the number of traveled miles and performed artillery firings and the number of hours flown by the aviation. Thus, in 1940, the ships traveled 1,627,000 miles, while in 1939 the figure had been only 1,452,000.<sup>16</sup> Here everywhere there was a struggle for the effective use of each mile traveled for training and drill.

In summing up the preliminary results of the concluding training year, the GMSH stated that on the fleet there had been a noticeable rise in the level of seamanship and the new equipment had been actively developed. There was also an improvement in gunnery training, particularly by employing modern fire control instruments on the ships, and there were better operations of the bomber and fighter aviation over the sea. At the same time substantial shortcomings were pointed out, primarily the lag in the operational-tactical training of the staff officers of the formations and command. These were analyzed in greater detail in December 1940 at a meeting of the naval leadership. This meeting outlined the ways for eliminating the shortcomings and played a major role in further improving the preparation of the staffs and command of the fleets to conduct operations at sea.

The tasks for the fleets in the area of operational and combat training for the year were set by the orders of the People's Commissar of the Navy as well as by special orders which were issued, as a rule, upon the results of the exercises and drills. Also noteworthy was the summing up of the results of the exercises held in the Red Banner Baltic Fleet.<sup>17</sup> This served as the basis for defining the next tasks: to improve the conduct of reconnaissance and observation, and to see to it that these became an organic requirements for each commander; to learn to subordinate the maneuvering of the ships and the formations to the carrying out of the set task and to combine this with fire; to abandon the restricted positional use of submarines and to make wider use of the maneuvering method; to eliminate the conditionality and complicate the situation for nighttime training combat; to improve the tactical training of the commanders and avoid routine and oversimplification in their carrying out of tactical missions; to organize the work of the staffs considering that a future war could be protracted and for this reason in the joint execution of combat missions by the ships the coordination of them, the operational thinking and unity of view of the commanders and the training of the personnel would be of decisive significance.

As relations between the USSR and Germany became exacerbated, the GMSH placed ever-higher demands on the operational and combat training of the fleets and this was carried out with increasing intensity. Thus, in the Baltic Fleet, in May and June 1941, this was carried out under conditions as close as possible to actual combat. During the sea voyage, ship patrols were sent out, while the combat nucleus was increased of the operational and tactical groupings and

groups. Aviation conducted intense air reconnaissance. The system of operational alerts worked out by the GMSH and promptly introduced in the fleets told positively with the outbreak of war on the actions of the personnel of the ships and units.

At the same time, in the course of the commenced combat operations, significant flaws were discovered which had been committed during the prewar years by the People's Commissariat of the Navy and the GMSH.<sup>18</sup> Cooperation of the ground, air and naval formations and units as well as the other branches of troops had not been sufficiently worked out and this told negatively in defending the naval bases. The prewar theory of naval art somewhat understated the combat capabilities of aviation and submarines. Substantial errors were made in working out the prewar shipbuilding program and these caused a clear disproportion in the classes of fighting ships (a shortage of special-built mindsweepers, ASW ships and the lack of landing craft and boats). The questions of combat for an amphibious landing and antilanding defense had not been completely worked out. In the prewar documents regulating operational and combat training, nothing was said about the use of the naval infantry in combat or cooperation of the fleet with national air defense units, long-range aviation and so forth. In summing up the results of the first month of the war, the fleet military council stated that the main obstacle for the effective operations of the ships had been the danger of mines. This, as before, had been underestimated.

As a whole, the prewar theory of Soviet military art, the actual working out of the combat alerts and the tasks of operational and combat training were on a rather high level. This was confirmed by the able operations of the sailors in the most difficult situation, by their courage, steadfastness and heroism.

The Navy successfully carried out the tasks which arose in the course of the war and acquired and developed valuable experience. This was also aided by the activities of the GMSH the functions of which were broadened. In particular, the need arose of organizing flotillas on the rivers and lakes, of involving ship personnel in combat operations on the maritime sectors, organizing units and formations of naval infantry and so forth. The structure of the GMSH was also somewhat altered. Thus, to the existing directorates another one was added, military communications [railroads], formed on the basis of the corresponding section. For the more planned elaboration of measures to support the inter-Allied maritime shipments, in October 1941, upon instructions of the People's Commissariat of the Navy, a section of external lines of communications was organized.

The GMSH devoted great attention to organizing the combat training of the formations involved in defending the seacoast areas. Due to the lack of time, exercises in some of them were carried out hurriedly, without sufficient practical elaboration of the questions being studied. In special directives the GMSH demanded that these shortcomings be eliminated by the formation commanders.

A great deal was done to improve combat training conducted in the training detachments and schools, the rear units and subunits of the fleets. In July 1941, the People's Commissariat of the Navy submitted to the GKO [State Defense Committee] a proposal to organize a training detachment on the Volga for supplementing the operational fleets, and on the basis of this the Volga Flotilla was subsequently organized.

In August of the same year, an order was issued by the People's Commissar of the Navy on the particular features of organizing combat training in wartime. This was aimed at ensuring success when the ships, units and formations carried out their combat missions. It was recommended first of all that the personnel be instructed in the mastery of the equipment and weapons and to teach them to maintain this in proper working order. More often they made it a practice to analyze the conducted operations and combats and here they investigated the tactics of enemy operations and worked out new tactical procedures for the use of weapons and combat equipment. Measures were set to generalize the experience of combat operations. The fleets were ordered to carefully study the instructive actions and in a systematized form to forward reports on these to the Combat Training Directorate of the GMSH for examination and further dissemination. A circular from the chief of the GMSH<sup>19</sup> defined the specific duties of the central directorates of the Navy in the aim of raising responsibility for the collection, systematization and generalization of the war's experience. Thus, the Technical Directorate was made responsible for studying instances of eliminating the consequences of damage to ships and generalizing and propagandizing the advanced methods of the combat operation of electromechanical units, systems and devices.

The experience of the first days of the war demanded a further improvement in the operational and tactical training of the command personnel. In particular, they began to more widely use such active forms for conducting this training as operational-tactical games on the questions of probable operations and analyses of conducted combat operations. In the course of these basic attention was given to organizing combat command and reconnaissance, to mastering the methods of the effective employment of the weapons and to skillful maneuvering. In the games, exercises and analyses approval and support were given to enterprising and decisive actions by commanders, to their ability to creatively utilize combat experience and to act correctly in an unanticipated situation.

For the non-combatant floats and flotillas, the GMSH set specific subjects for operational and rear games with an orientation to real combat operations. For example, in 1942, the Pacific Fleet in the course of the operational game worked out the question "Defense of the Main Base From the Rear With the Simultaneous Repelling of an Enemy Landing Force From the Sea and the Air," while the Caspian Flotilla worked on the question "Carrying Out State Shipments Over a Month Under the Conditions of Heavy Countermeasures by Enemy Aviation and Its Use of Various Mines With Simultaneous Fire Support for the Maritime Flank of Our Ground Forces in Another Area."

Operational-tactical assemblies were widely employed and these made it possible to inform the command personnel of the fleets, the flagship specialists of the formations and the ship commanders of new methods for fighting the enemy. From their results, the people's commissar of the navy issued special orders which set out the necessary measures to eliminate the detected shortcomings.

The basic methods for training operational-level command were the independent study of the experience of operations and combat, an analysis of the existing shortcomings and positive aspects and the working out of recommendations for preparing and conducting operations as well as supervision over all types of their support.

The instructions on operational and combat training and on working out new tactical procedures and the methods of employing weapons were issued to the command of the fleets and flotillas, as in prewar times, by orders of the people's commissar of the navy. Thus, in the order of 1942, there were plans for the further mastery of complex forms of cooperation between the ship and air formations, improved planning for the operations of submarines on the lines of communication and their command and control in the course of operations. In the combat training system, particular attention was paid to improving the training of the personnel using acquired experience. It was essential to increase the intensity of working out exercises related to the maintenance of equipment and weapons as well as their effective employment in combat. In organizing gunnery training, the number of antiaircraft artillery firings was increased and the conditions for conducting them made more complex. The gun commanders, for example, were to learn to independently control fire at aircraft which were diving or flying low from different directions. Particular attention was given to the discipline of observing established rules, conditions and standards, to the precise execution of the issued commands and signals for opening and ceasing fire and to the maneuvering of fire. The question was raised of teaching the ship commanders to correctly determine the ammunition required in firing at shore targets. In torpedo training, preference was given to practical exercises. The task was set of bringing the conditions of the exercises closer to actual combat, to increase the number of actually swept mines, particularly magnetic and acoustic, to master the equipment and tactics of their sweeping and to learn to replace actually damaged sweeps. The signalmen were instructed to saturate the drills with more elements of combat watches and to master the skills of maintaining in the course of the operation reliable communication with the troop units, the correction posts, the submarines operating on the lines of communications and so forth.

In the course of the war, the questions of training the personnel for damage control of the ships assumed particular urgency. This included: teamwork among the emergency parties; the rapid and effective plugging of holes; mastering the particular features of combating fire and water in inaccessible places; the repairing and replacing of failed monitoring and metering instruments; the use of improvised means and various devices for eliminating oil and fuel leaks and containing fires and possible conditions for flooding. Physical training and mass sports work assumed a purely practical military focus. Even matches were turned into additional training drills in the aim of physical conditioning and strengthening special skills.

An assessment of the combat training level of the combatant fleets in 1942 was given in an order of the people's commissar of the navy. It pointed out that "combat experience of the personnel in the combatant fleets and flotillas has been increased as a result of their combat activities, however, there are a number of serious shortcomings in the combat skills of the ships, units and particularly the formations."<sup>20</sup> Particular mention was made of the insufficient working out of coordination (the air forces of the fleets with the submarines, the air forces of the fleets with surface vessels and the air forces of the fleets with the coastal defenses). Concern was voiced over the late introduction of advanced experience in a number of places, the repetition of mistakes and instances of a formal and routine approach to carrying out certain combat missions.

Proceeding from this, the GMSH issued instructions to conduct combat training in full accord with the operational plans, giving the formation commanders initiative in setting the sequence for training the men.

The combat training of the personnel in the operational formations and units and the operational breadth of view of the command personnel increased as combat experience was gained and this was carefully analyzed by the staffs and widely introduced into the training practices of the fleets and flotillas. For example, experience was exchanged by having the most instructive report received from one or another fleet be sent out to the other fleets after its careful study by the GMSH and the appending of well reasoned commentary. Thus, in April 1942, the report of the staff of the Black Sea Fleet was widely disseminated on the support of its sea lines of communications over the period from 22 June 1941 through 22 January 1942.

From the results of operational and combat training in 1943, the GMSH pointed out that the operational-tactical training on the fleets had begun to be carried out more effectively, the importance of the staffs had risen as bodies of command and control of operations and combat, the quality and level of staff work had risen and the organization of exercises for combat control and command had improved. The Black Sea and Baltic Fleets and a number of flotillas had acquired and successfully strengthened the skills of preparing and conducting operations jointly with the ground forces.

In the aim of improving the methods of conducting individual measures related to operational training, new manuals were worked out and the necessary corrections incorporated in the existing ones. In 1944, the "Manual on Conducting Operational Games in the Navy" was approved and put into effect. As was required, changes were also incorporated in the documents determining the content and course of combat training. During the same year, the units and formations received supplements<sup>21</sup> to the "Combat Training Course for a Surface Vessel," "Combat Training Course for Destroyers," "Combat Training Course for Minesweepers" and others. From the results of combat training in 1944, the GMSH concluded that its planning and organization had become clearer and corresponded to the tasks of the combat activities of the fleets (flotillas) and were an inseparable part of preparing for the operations. A profound analysis of fleet combat operations over the 2½ years of the war was made by Adm I. S. Isakov in a series of journal articles<sup>22</sup> which ultimately came out in 1944 as a separate publication.

The GMSH was constantly concerned for reinforcing the achieved level of the combat training of the personnel as well as for its further rise. In April 1945, the people's commissar of the navy issued an order on the results of combat training for the winter period and the tasks for the summer one.<sup>23</sup> This pointed to a number of major shortcomings. In particular, it was pointed out that the good situation had not been utilized everywhere for the wider development of combat training and for improving its quality. The planned tasks were carried out without the proper tenacity and certain sea cruises were cut short. The combat experience gained in the course of the war had not been introduced everywhere and at times this was lost even on those ships where previously it had been acquired and disseminated. Many exercises with the actual employment of guns and equipment were largely conducted under simplified range conditions. In a supplement to the order, the GMSH issued instructions and demanded that the staffs of the fleets and flotillas improve leadership over combat training.

By the end of the war the Navy had gained rich diverse combat experience. In closely cooperating with the ground forces and the other Armed Services, it had made a major contribution to the overall victory over the enemy. To its score were over 1,600 destroyed enemy ships and vessels. The fleet had transported 9.8 million persons (troops and civilian population) across seas, lakes and rivers and had carried more than 94 million tons of military and national economic freight.<sup>24</sup>

The growing successes of the USSR Navy in the course of the Great Patriotic War was largely determined by the high level of operational-tactical views established in the fleet, by the state of operational and combat training, and by flexibility and mobility of the command and control bodies, including the GMSH. Due to the tenacity, creative activity and competence of the GMSH officers, it was possible in a comparatively short period of time to eliminate the shortcomings disclosed at the outset of the war, to strengthen contact with the fleets and clearly coordinate actions with the maritime groupings of ground forces. This was greatly aided by the close contact with the Soviet Army General Staff.

Today's USSR Navy, having long since emerged on the broad expanses of the ocean, possesses enormous operational-strategic capabilities and is capable of carrying out strategic tasks in fighting against a strong sea enemy. But its further development cannot be successful without a profound study by all levels of commanders of the acquired combat experience and particularly for leading operational and combat training which ensures a high level of fleet readiness.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> S. P. Stavitskiy, "Vvedeniye v obshchuyu taktiku Morskikh Sil" [Introduction to General Naval Tactics], Leningrad, Voenno-morskaya akademiya VMF, 1940, p 2.

<sup>2</sup> The GMSH, as the central command and control body in the USSR Navy was established in 1938. From 1955, after several changes of name, it began to be called the Main Staff of the Navy. On the eve of and during the war the chiefs of the GMSH were: L. M. Galler (1938-1940); I. S. Isakov (1941-1943); V. A. Alafuzov (1944-1945); S. G. Kucherov (1945). See: "Sovetskaya Voennoye Entsiklopediya" [Soviet Military Encyclopedia], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 2, 1976, p 468; Vol 3, 1977, p 599; Vol 1, 1976, p 135; Vol 4, 1977, p 547.

<sup>3</sup> MORSKOY SBORNIK, No 8, 1975, p 16.

<sup>4</sup> "Istoriya Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny Sovetskogo Soyuza 1941-1945" [History of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union of 1941-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 1, 1960, p 45.

<sup>5</sup> "Boevaya letopis' Voenno-Morskogo Flota 1941-1942" [Combat Chronicle of the Navy 1941-1942], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1983, p 3.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

- <sup>7</sup> A portion of them was commissioned in the first half of 1941 and participated in the war. See: "TsGA VMF [Central State Archives of the Navy], folio 864, inv. 1, file 172, sheet 87.
- <sup>8</sup> "Istoriya Velikoy Otechestvennoy...", Vol 1, p 455.
- <sup>9</sup> V. I. Lenin, PSS [Complete Collected Works], Vol 9, p 156.
- <sup>10</sup> N. G. Kuznetsov, "Kursom k pobede" [On a Course to Victory], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1976, p 24.
- <sup>11</sup> PRAVDA, 28 July 1940.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>14</sup> "Rukovodstvo po provedeniyu takticheskikh i otryadnykh ucheniy" [Manual on Conducting Tactical and Detachment Exercises], Moscow-Leningrad, Voenmorizdat, 1940.
- <sup>15</sup> N. G. Kuznetsov, op. cit., pp 23, 24.
- <sup>16</sup> TsGA VMF, folio 864, inv. 1, file 172, sheet 68.
- <sup>17</sup> KRASNYY FLOT, 8 September 1940.
- <sup>18</sup> See: N. G. Kuznetsov, op. cit., pp 21-27, 67-68; A. V. Basov, "Flot v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne 1941-1945" [The Fleet in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945], Moscow, Nauka, 1980, pp 56-57; V. I. Achkasov, and N. B. Pavlovich, "Sovetskoye voyenno-morskoye iskusstvo v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne" [Soviet Naval Art in the Great Patriotic War], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1973, p 15.
- <sup>19</sup> TsVMA [Central Naval Archives], folio 2, inv. 6, file 1525, sheets 9-10.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid., folio 14, inv. 47, file 230, sheets 314-316.
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid., folio 2, inv. 16, file 89, sheet 301.
- <sup>22</sup> MORSKOY SBORNIK, Nos 1-4, 1944.
- <sup>23</sup> TsVMA, folio 14, inv. 47, file 274, sheets 220-223.
- <sup>24</sup> "50 let Vooruzhennykh Sil SSSR" [Fifty Years of the USSR Armed Forces], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1968, pp 465-466.

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CSO: 1801/386

## COOPERATION OF LONG-RANGE BOMBER AVIATION, GROUND TROOPS TRACED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 7, Jul 84 (signed to press 21 Jun 84) pp 36-43

[Article by Col Gen Avn V. Reshetnikov, deputy commander-in-chief of the Air Forces and Hero of the Soviet Union: "From the Combat Experience of Long-Range Aviation in the Operations of the Ground Forces"]

[Text] According to prewar views, the long-range bomber aviation (DBA) was the aviation of the High Command with a mission basically of undermining the military-economic might of the enemy, destroying the naval forces of the line and disrupting rail, sea and motor vehicle shipments. Its actions were to be carried out predominantly outside of operational contact with the actions of the ground forces in the interests of the war as a whole. At the same time, in special instances, as was pointed out in the 1940 Field Manual of Bomber Aviation, the DBA could be involved in operations in the interests of the ground forces for hitting enemy personnel and combat equipment in the near operational depth and on the battlefield.<sup>1</sup>

At the outset of the Great Patriotic War, the developing situation required the concentration of all air attack forces on defeating the advancing enemy groupings and its aviation. Subsequently, the basic missions related to the combat operations of the Air Forces in the interests of the ground troops as a rule were carried out with the participation of the long-range aviation [DA]. Thus, in the aim of destroying enemy personnel and combat equipment on the battlefield and in the near rear, the DBA during the war years spent 40.4 percent of the aircraft sorties (almost as much as the frontal [tactical] aviation of 46.5 percent), 30.6 percent for attacking rail installations and operational reserves, 9.6 percent against airfields and just 3.1 percent against industrial installations and administrative-political centers in the deep rear.<sup>2</sup> The remaining flight time was spent on carrying out other missions. And the proportional amount of the missions carried out in the course of the war changed substantially as is clearly seen from the given table.

The great consumption of DA flying time for destroying troops and combat equipment in the tactical and near enemy operational depth during the first period of the war can be explained by a number of factors, the chief ones being: the losses suffered by us in aviation (particularly attack aviation) as a result of the surprise attack by Nazi Germany, the shortage of bomber and ground attack aviation, and the scattering of the frontal aviation over the all-arms armies.

Table\*

## Distribution of DA Efforts According to Missions

Missions	Number of Aircraft Sorties by Periods of Great Patriotic War, %			
	First		Second	Third
	1941	1942		
Destruction of troops and combat equipment in tactical and near operational depth . .	74.3	50.3	39.2	19.5
Thwarting rail shipments and combating reserves . . . . .	6.4	22.6	36.6	58.0
Destruction of aviation at airfields . . .	7.5	16.6	11.6	6.7
Other missions (attacking military- industrial installations in the deep rear, air reconnaissance, transporting personnel, weapons and materiel) . . . . .	11.8	10.5	12.6	15.8

\* Table compiled from data of TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folios of the DA air corps.

Even on the third day of the war, the Soviet Command was forced to use the DBA in defensive operations of the ground forces. Here its main efforts were aimed at destroying the enemy first echelon troops, the reserves in the tactical and operational depth, tanks, artillery, ammunition and fuel dumps, staffs, command posts and communications centers. The DBA operated against the airfields in the aim of destroying enemy aircraft on the ground, railed installations for interdicting troop movements and attacked bridges and crossings, as was the case, for example, on the Western Dvina, Neman, Berezina, Prut, Dniester and other rivers.

In a number of instances the DBA was involved in front-level counterstrikes. Thus, for defeating the Smolensk-Yartsevo enemy grouping on 26-28 July 1941 in the interests of the Western Front, 220 aircraft were involved from the I, II and III DBA Air Corps (commanders, respectively, Maj Gen Avn V. I. Izotov, Cols K. N. Smirnov and N. S. Skripko).<sup>3</sup>

The actions of the crews were marked by self-sacrifice, boldness, decisiveness and tactical intelligence. But due to the fact that the aircraft groups operated, as a rule, without a fighter cover, the losses continuously rose. By the end of 1941, in the fighting strength of the DBA 7 divisions remained with 2 regiments in each while the number of aircraft in the regiments had dropped from 60 to 20. The reserves were lacking for replenishing the losses. Soon thereafter they had to abandon regimental flights and shift over to echeloned operations in small groups (3-6 aircraft) as well as by individual aircraft, that is, in essence, conduct assault operations. Due to the decreased number of aircraft

and for convenience of command and control, in August 1941, the corps level of command was abolished.<sup>4</sup>

In the aim of reducing aircraft losses, Hq SHC in a directive of 3 July 1941 demanded that the DBA shift to nighttime operations from great heights and during the daytime allowed it to be employed only with the obligatory escort of fighters and the signing of forces to suppress antiaircraft artillery.<sup>5</sup>

The employment of DBA under nighttime conditions reduced losses and involved a change in the battle formations and combat tactics. Flight in a close formation was excluded. The battle formation of a regiment in making a concentrated strike consisted of two squadron columns while the battle formation of a squadron consisted of leaders and an attack group. The leaders eliminated the target and dropped illuminating and incendiary bombs. The fires which formed served as a good marker for the other pilots in bombing. The aircraft of the assault group appeared over the target from different directions and at different altitudes.

The decision to convert to nighttime operations was a correct one but, unfortunately, somewhat delayed. The DBA had lost its former strike force. In the immediate future this decision could not provide the expected results since a majority of the crews had not been trained for night operations (particularly in bad weather conditions) in direct proximity to the forward edge. It was no accident that in the half-year of 1941 only 30 percent of the aircraft sorties were made at night.<sup>6</sup> The DBA began to be employed with even greater intensity during daylight. This was the case in the operations of the Soviet troops in the Leningrad sector and in the defensive operations of the Central, Bryansk, Southwestern and Southern Fronts.

From the very outset of the war, Headquarters had endeavored to organize centralized command and control of the long-range aviation forces and their massed employment. In a directive of 3 July 1941, it demanded that the chief of the General Staff set the missions for the DBA personally. However, up to the end of 1941 only twice was it possible to carry out massed attacks involving the aviation forces of the fronts and the DBA to destroy enemy aviation on airfields. The commanders of the fronts where the DBA formations were based more often used them at their discretion and this inevitably led to the dispersion of the DBA forces, that is, during the first months of the war the DBA formations were actually in operational terms under the commanders of the fronts. The missions for the aviation formations and units, as a rule, were set only for one sortie and rarely for a day (night). Command and control were carried out from the command post of the air division commander usually located at one of the airfields.

Prior to the war and during the first months of it no instructions were worked out on organizing the cooperation of the DBA with the ground forces. Each staff of the front set its own signals for designating the forward edge and the target instructions. Personal contact between the commanders of the air formations and the all-arms commanders at the command and observation posts was rare. Only in individual instances were air representatives or operations groups from the DBA staff sent out to the staffs of the all-arms formations and field forces. Starting with the defensive operation at Moscow, more attention began to be paid to the questions of cooperation with the troops and air forces of the fronts.

In March 1942, the State Defense Committee [GKO] took a decision to transform the DBA into the long-range aviation (ADD) and to put it directly under Hq SHC. Maj Gen Avn A. Ye. Golovanov (from August 1944, chief marshal aviation) was appointed the ADD commander.

The ADD began making concentrated night raids with larger forces. Although the proportional amount of its attacks on airfields and military industrial installations deep in the enemy rear markedly increased, the objectives characteristic for frontal aviation remained still the main targets of the ADD due to the former difficult situation on the fronts.

In 1942, the ADD was employed in the interests of the troops of the Crimean and Bryansk Fronts, but its main efforts were focused on the Stalingrad sector. Having a significant operating range, the ADD comparatively rarely resorted to an airfield maneuver, hitting targets in the north and extreme south of our country without changing bases. But in August 1942, five divisions were relocated closer to Stalingrad. This provided a higher combat intensity and proper conditions for organizing cooperation both with the front aviation and with the ground forces. By incomplete fueling, the crews were able to increase the bomb load of the aircraft. By that time navigating had become more confident and reliable and this was very important, since the attacks against enemy installations were made in direct proximity to our own troops. The forward edge and the directions to the targets were marked by a system of signals: by bonfires, artillery fire, by searchlight beams which sometimes formed the gates for the passage and were then guides toward the target.

During the period of the defense of Stalingrad the ADD was also involved in aviation counterpreparations. Thus, during the night of 27 September 1942, the ADD formations together with the night bombers of the 8th Air Army made bombing strikes against enemy troops to the west and south of the tractor plant, that is, within the city limits. Under these conditions it was very important to organize cooperation with the ground troops and frontal aviation and ensure reliable command and control of combat operations. Command and control were carried out by the air commanders from the forward command posts with the extensive use of radio. The aiming points were determined from the forward command posts and were frequently shifted from one area of the city to another while the aircraft were in the air. In skipping ahead, it must be said that during the years of the war there was not a single instance where the ADD hit our own troops.

In the counteroffensive at Stalingrad, the ADD in cooperation with the air armies of the fronts participated in an air offensive, a new form of operational employment of the Air Forces. The operations of the frontal and long-range aviation were coordinated by the representative of Headquarters, the Air Forces Commander, Gen A. A. Novikov while the combat operations of the ADD were directly led by Gen N. S. Skripko and his operations group.

At the start of 1943, the ADD already had 11 divisions and from May a long-range bomber air corps began to be organized. By the end of the year, the aircraft fleet of the ADD had risen up to 1,070 aircraft. The conditions of airfield basing and logistical support had been improved.

As the shortcomings were eliminated in the use of the long-range bombers, as the organizational structure was improved, experience acquired and the ADD underwent quantitative and qualitative development, there were also significant changes in the nature of the missions carried out by it and the methods of its combat employment.

In the spring and summer of 1943, before the start of the defensive operations of our troops at Kursk, the ADD made around 30,000 aircraft sorties in the aim of interdicting railroad shipments. As the German operations documents indicate, one of the reasons for shifting the time for the start of the German offensive on the Kursk Salient was the attacks by our bombers on its lines of communications. The ADD began to be used more frequently for attacking airfields for the purpose of winning air supremacy.

In the defensive operations at Kursk, the ADD operated in the interests of the troops of the Central and Voronezh Fronts (5-12 July 1943). For the first time it made massed attacks against enemy installations on the battlefield at night. Up to 250 airplanes were sometimes involved in the raids.

In the counteroffensive at Kursk, the basic missions of the ADD were: aviation softening up for the attack and support of the ground forces in their breaking through of the enemy defenses to the entire depth, the combating of enemy aviation, reserves and all types of shipments, and the conducting of air reconnaissance. For participating in the counteroffensive during its first days, two-thirds of the ADD forces were assigned for assisting the Bryansk Front and one-third for the troops of the Western Front. Prior to the counteroffensive for attacking the forward edge of the Nazi defenses during two nights on narrow sections of the front, the long-range bombers for the first time used large bombs (FAB-5000, -2000 and -1000). On the first day of the offensive, the ADD aircraft neutralized and destroyed strongpoints and centers of resistance in immediate proximity to the forward edge and in the tactical depth of enemy defenses. On the second day, the basic efforts of the ADD were concentrated on making strikes against airfields and reserves which were being moved up. In the Orel Offensive Operation, for example, the ADD made 4,545 aircraft sorties, including 1,262 for strikes against troops and equipment on the battlefield, 1,887 for stopping movements and 496 in strikes against airfields.<sup>7</sup> During the period of defeating the Belgorod-Kharkov enemy grouping, for assisting the ground forces the ADD formations made 1,896 aircraft sorties, including more than 50 percent in the interests of the troops in breaking through the enemy's main defensive zone.<sup>8</sup>

In the Battle of Kursk, Headquarters gave only general missions to the ADD which was directly under it. The ADD commander, together with the commanders of the fronts and the commanders of the air armies, concretized them in terms of time and place. ADD VPU [temporary control post] were organized in the areas of the command posts of the commanders of the Bryansk and Western Fronts. Control of the aviation was carried out through communications centers which had been set up on the ADD staff, in the air divisions and corps. The place of the commanders of the ADD units and formations during the period of combat operations was determined by the situation. As a rule, the commanders of the regiments, divisions and corps were at their own command posts at the airfield where the bombers took and in these instances did not fly out on assignment themselves, for the

conditions required that the crews be controlled from the ground. Here radios were widely used. The crews flying in the battle formation maintained two-way communication with the command post of the air regiment while at the radio centers of the divisions and corps the receiving (monitoring) of the crew reports was organized. Here two-way independent contact of the aircraft with the command post of the air regiment did not exclude radio contact within the battle formation of the bomber column and provided the column commanders with control over subordinate crews on the route and in the target area. All the orders of the commanders of the air corps and divisions were given to the crews via the regimental command post.

Under the conditions of the rapid development of the offensive by the Soviet troops, where the ADD formations were unable to quickly relocate, the commanders of the air formations were ordered to establish mobile command posts. Certain corps commanders (Gens Ye. F. Loginov and G. N. Tupikov) worked out a variation of a mobile command post located on an LI-2 aircraft which had been equipped with a transceiver and telegraph-telephone equipment which could be connected to the extensive communications network of the subordinate units which were at the operational airfields. Experience showed that such command posts proved to be good.

In the summer of 1943, a new battle formation of an ADD regiment was worked out and employed. It was formed in the following manner: ahead operated a group for sealing off the enemy night fighter airfields and behind it with a time interval of 3-5 minutes came the lead aircraft for locating the target and it was also the weather plane; some 1-2 minutes later came the target eliminating group (2 or 3 aircraft), the group for neutralizing the air defenses, a target designation group, and 1 or 2 minutes later the attack groups and, finally, the crews of the illuminating monitor and the photographer-monitor. The number of illuminating, search and target designating crews varied depending upon nighttime visibility and the weather in the target area.

The combat formation of an air division (air corps), as a rule, consisted of a support wave and one or several attack waves. The support wave included the weather and target scouts, guidance and designation, target illuminating and air defense neutralizing groups. In the assault wave were bombers carrying incendiary and high explosive bombs as well as so-called linear target illuminators which provided illumination during the entire time of the attack. The vertical separation between the air divisions and air corps was within a range of 1,500-5,500 m. The bombing altitude was not constant and depended upon the size of the target, the resistance of the air defenses, the presence and height of cloudiness.

Bombing was carried out from level flight by different methods including individual, series, volley, series-volley, and always pinpoint but also for invisible targets and by time count. In the aim of wearing down the enemy troops, they employed operations by individual aircraft over the entire period of darkness. "Free hunting" was also practiced.

In line with the increased quantitative and qualitative composition of the frontal aviation and the growth of its combat and operational capabilities for carrying out missions directly in the interests of the troops of the fronts, during the third period of the war the proportional amount of ADD operations to

destroy troops, combat equipment in the tactical and near operational depth was significantly reduced. In ADD operations, the major place came to be strikes to disrupt the operation of rail and motor road communications as well as destroy enemy reserves. Here the combating of reserves assumed a more organized and purposeful nature. Thus, in July 1944, during the Belorussian Strategic Operation, a major air operation was carried out to prevent operational movements and disrupt the maneuvering of reserves. All eight ADD air corps participated in it and they dropped 4,130 tons of bombs.

At the same time, Headquarters at the requisite moments successively concentrated large ADD forces in the zones of the advancing fronts. Thus, for participation in the Leningrad-Novgorod Operation, during various periods up to seven air corps were used and in the Iasi-Kishinev up to six. The principle of a decisive massing of aviation was maintained in all subsequent operations of this period. The ground troops and the ADD formations obtained even richer experience in resolving the questions of cooperation and this was reinforced in the "Instructions for Recognizing, Target Designation and Communications of the Ground Troops With the Aviation" worked out by the General Staff in 1944.<sup>9</sup> Cooperation in an operation between the air army formations of a front and the ADD during the period of air softening up was carried out in terms of time and objectives of operations. Usually the air army formations attacked objectives in the first defensive zone and the ADD in the second. But there also were instances when the long-range bombers in the course of the air softening up had to operate 1,000-1,200 m from the forward edge (Vitebsk-Orsha, Mogilev and other operations).<sup>10</sup>

In certain operations of the third period of the war (Vyborg of 1944 and East Prussian in 1945), preliminary air softening up was carried out in the aim of destroying permanent defensive works, for disrupting the enemy fire plan, for neutralizing aviation at airfields, disrupting movements and combating reserves.

While up to 1943 the basic method of ADD combat operations in carrying out air softening up was a concentrated strike consisting of a division-regiment, in the operations of 1944-1945, wider use was made of a massed strike involving several air divisions (corps). The operational configuration here was multi-wave. The battle formation of the air divisions consisted of regimental columns and the corps of divisional columns. The density of the strike was achieved primarily by a flight of bombers at shortened intervals with a slight excess in height. The time intervals between the airplanes were up to 15-20 seconds.

As a total in the air softening up during the third period of the war, 1,571 aircraft sorties were used and in air support for the troops from 10,652 aircraft sorties.<sup>11</sup> As a whole, the proportional amount of the involvement of long-range aviation for air softening up for the attack and direct support for the troops of the fronts, as was noted in the table, declined from 39.2 percent in 1943 to 19.5 percent (1944-1945). The long-range bombers, in operating in the interests of the front offensive operations, now focused predominantly on combating rail movements and enemy reserves. The ADD formations usually began to carry out this mission on the 3d-7th day of the operations, that is, after the breaking through of the enemy tactical defensive zone and with the operations of our troops in the operational depth. But there were also instances (as in the second period of the war) when the long-range bombers were used against rail installations in preparing for the operations (Leningrad-Novgorod, Vistula-Oder, Iasi-Kishinev and others).

The individual long-range aviation formations were used for transporting by air combat equipment and materiel to the tank armies and this allowed them an opportunity to continue the offensive without a halt at a high pace under conditions of a significant distance from the main forces of the front (Bereznegovatoye-Snigarevka, Korsun-Shevchenkivskiy, Belorussian, Manchurian Operations and others).

Thus, during the entire war, the DBA (ADD) formations took direct part in the offensive and defensive operations of the fronts and collaborated closely with the ground forces. However, the degree of their involvement and the nature of the missions carried out in the interests of the all-arms formations varied in each of the periods of the war.

In the first period, as a consequence of the shortage of bomber and ground attack aviation in the air forces of the fronts, the DBA was widely employed for attacking the enemy infantry, tanks and defensive works directly on the battlefield and in the near depth. Subsequently, when the frontal aviation had sufficient resources for direct support of the ground forces combat operations, the basic efforts of the ADD were concentrated on attacking enemy airfields, lines of communications and approaching reserves. Characteristically, by 1945, when military operations had been shifted to German territory and the Soviet Air Forces had won unchallenged air supremacy, the degree of involving the ADD in ground forces operations not only did not decline but also continued to rise. This is explained by the fact that during the entire war, the necessity remained of a powerful and continuous effect on the enemy from the air both in the offensive and defensive operations.

A major principle in the employment and a condition for the achieving of maximally effective results in the combat operations of the ADD were centralized control and command of its resources and massed employment against the most important objectives. The experience of the war showed that the ADD achieved a significant effect when it was used at full strength against a limited number of objectives. Scattered operations never produced the desired results.

The long-range bombers, in operating close to their troops, were dependably provided with high-accuracy navigation equipment and constant control over the crews from the forward command posts, as any mistake in choosing the aiming point involved not so much a miss as the possibility of hitting our own troops. The organization of cooperation of the ADD with the ground forces on the battlefield was extremely complex and demanded from all levels of command and staffs great effort and art in the reciprocal coordinating of joint actions.

Certainly the experience of employing the DBA (ADD) gained in the last war should be viewed in light of the changes which have occurred in the postwar years in the technical equipping of the aviation, its purpose, nature of operations and methods of combat employment. Being a powerful, long-distance means and maintaining its basic purpose, it should be ready to carry out the most diverse tasks. The guarantee for success lies in the high and all-round combat skills of its flight personnel.

# FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> "Boyevoy ustav bombardirovochnoy aviatsii (BUBA-40)" [Bomber Aviation Field Manual (BUBA-40)], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1940, pp 8, 9.
- <sup>2</sup> I. V. Timokhovich, "Operativnoye iskusstvo Sovetskikh VVS v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne" [Operational Art of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Great Patriotic War], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1976, p 246.
- <sup>3</sup> TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 209, inv. 19013, file 1, sheet 6.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid., folio 35, inv. 11290, file 146, sheet 4.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid., folio 48-A, inv. 1554, file 19, sheet 136.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid., folio 35, inv. 11290, file 146, sheet 196.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid., folio 39, inv. 11495, file 13, sheet 51.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid., sheet 62.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid., folio 35, inv. 260657, file 18, sheets 92-85.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid., folio 39, inv. 11519, file 873, sheets 7, 8.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid., file 1084, sheet 21; file 1080, sheets 4-51; file 1088, sheets 13-27.

VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 11, 1981, p 29.

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CSO: 1801/386

## LIBERATION OF POLAND BY SOVIET TROOPS IN WORLD WAR II REVIEWED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 7, Jul 84 (signed to press 21 Jun 84) pp 44-50

[Article by Candidate of Historical Sciences, Col P. Kochegura: "The 40th Anniversary of the Beginning of the Liberation of Poland"]

[Text] Forty years ago, in July 1944, the Soviet Armed Forces, having expelled the Nazi occupiers from a larger portion of the homeland, commenced their liberation mission on Polish territory.

As a result of the successful carrying out of offensive operations in the first half of 1944, the Soviet Army had defeated large enemy troop groupings at Leningrad and Novgorod, on the Right-Bank Ukraine and in the Crimea. The Soviet troops had advanced up to 450 km in depth and were approaching on the western sector the state frontiers with Poland and Czechoslovakia while in the southwest had reached the state frontier with Romania and had entered its territory. Conditions had been created for conducting new offensive operations.<sup>1</sup>

The order of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of 1 May 1944 to the Soviet Armed Forces set the following missions: to fully clear Soviet land of Nazi invaders, to restore the USSR state frontier along the entire line from the Berents to the Black Seas and "free from German captivity our brother Poles, Czechoslovaks and other allied peoples of Western Europe which are under the heel of Nazi Germany."<sup>2</sup>

Great work was carried out in the Soviet Armed Forces to prepare the troops to carry out the liberation mission of the Polish and other enslaved peoples of Europe. In accord with the instructions of the VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)] Central Committee, in May 1944, a meeting was held for the military council members of the fronts and this focused the command and the political bodies on strengthening the indoctrination of the men in a spirit of socialist patriotism and proletarian internationalism.<sup>3</sup> The questions of reorganizing and strengthening party political work in the troops beyond the Soviet Union were discussed in mid-June 1944 at the Council for Military-Political Propaganda Under the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army with the participation of the Central Committee secretaries and members of the Politburo of the VKP(b) Central Committee A. S. Shcherbakov and A. A. Zhdanov.<sup>4</sup>

At the end of July 1944, the USSR State Defense Committee [GKO] conducted a meeting for the military council members and this discussed the tasks of the Soviet Armed Forces outside our country.<sup>5</sup>

At the end of the conference, its participants were given a GKO decree on tasks related to the entry of Soviet troops on Polish territory. It contained the following demands for the Soviet military: to hold high the honor of the Soviet citizen and to respect the sovereignty and national dignity of the liberated peoples.

In accord with these demands, the military councils, the commanders, the political bodies and the party organizations explained to the personnel the particular features of the military-political situation in which now combat was to be carried out against the enemy as well as the party's demands on establishing correct relationships with the population of the liberated countries as well as increasing discipline, order and organization. For the personnel lectures and reports were given according to a special plan and talks were held. The army press systematically published materials on combat cooperation between the Soviet and Polish soldiers and on the heroic feats of the Soviet soldiers and officers for the sake of the liberation of the Polish people. The military councils of the fronts which participated in the liberation of Poland published an appeal to the Polish people. This set out the liberation goals of the Soviet Army on the land of the fraternal Polish people as well as the tasks of the Soviet troops to provide them with aid in the struggle for national and social liberation.

The beginning of the liberation of Poland was made in the course of the Lwow-Sandomierz and Belorussian strategic offensive operations.

On 17 July, on the Rava-Russkaya sector, the 1st Guards Tank Army under the command of Col Gen Tank Trps M. Ye. Katukov, having been committed to the breakthrough, attacked on the axis of Sokal, Rava-Russkaya. Its 44th Guards Tank Brigade under the command of Col I. I. Gusakovskiy, in developing the offensive, on this very same day reached the Western Bug, crossed it and was the first to enter Polish territory, having captured a bridgehead in the region of Dobroczin.<sup>6</sup> On the next day, the 3d Guards Army under the command of Col Gen V. N. Gordov crossed the river and entered Polish land in the region of Sokal.

In continuing the stubborn battles to liberate the southern areas of Poland, the armies on the right wing of the First Ukrainian Front (commander, Mar SU I. F. Konev) on 23 July reached the San River in the area of Jaroslaw and crossed it to the south and north of the town. Having crushed the Nazi defenses, they began a rapid advance to the west and on 29 July the forward units had reached the Vistula from Annopol to Baranow. After reconnoitering the opposite bank, the troops of the front captured bridgeheads on the left bank of the Vistula in the area to the south of Sandomierz and as a result of energetic operations by the end of 1 August had widened it.<sup>7</sup>

The field forces of the Third and Second Belorussian Fronts and the right wing of the First Belorussian Front (respectively, the commanders Army Gen I. D. Chernyakhovskiy, Col Gen G. F. Zakharov and Mar SU K. K. Rokossovskiy) by mid-July, in pursuing the remnants of the scattered enemy troops, reached the line of the Neman River to the south of Kaunas, Grodno, Volkovysk, Pruzhany and were approaching the state frontier with Poland.

The offensive by the troops on the left wing of the First Belorussian Front started in the morning of 18 July and developed successfully. On this day the main forces of the Soviet troop grouping broke through the German defenses. The 47th Army of Lt Gen N. I. Gusev advanced rapidly toward Siedlce, while the 8th Guards Army of Col Gen V. I. Chuykov and the 69th Army of Lt Gen V. Ya. Kolpakcha pushed toward Lublin.

By the end of 20 July, a breach 130 km along the front and 70 km in depth had been formed in the German defenses. On the same day, the troops of the front on a number of sectors crossed the Western Bug and entered Poland. The first on this sector were the 328th Rifle Division under the command of Col I. G. Pavlovskiy, the 132d Rifle Division of Col Ya. G. Tsvintarnyy, the 165th Rifle Division of Col N. I. Kaladze and the 39th Guards Rifle Division of Lt Col V. M. Shtringol'.<sup>8</sup>

After breaking through the Nazi defenses on the Western Bug, on 22 July, the 2d Tank Army under the command of Lt Gen Tank Trps S. I. Bogdanov was committed to battle. Having made a 75-km rapid advance, it by the end of the day had initiated heavy battles for Lublin and 2 days later, on 24 July, in cooperation with formations of the 8th Guards Army, liberated the city. A day later, the 2d Tank and 8th Guards Armies reached the Vistula and captured the important enemy strongpoints of Deblin and Polawy. The troops of the 69th Army on 29 July broke through to the Vistula to the south of Polawy. Its forward units, having crossed the river, captured a bridgehead on the western bank. In the region of Magnuszew, the 8th Guards Army initiated combat for a bridgehead.<sup>9</sup>

On 27 July, the 2d Tank Army, having turned over its sector to the troops of the 8th Guards and 69th Armies, began a rapid offensive maneuver to the north in the aim of capturing the suburb of Warsaw, Praga, and together with the 47th Army, to cut off the enemy's escape route to the west. However, it was impossible to take Praga without a halt. The Nazi Command endeavored at any price to hold the bridgehead on the right bank of the Vistula to the northeast of Praga and for this it had concentrated four tank divisions and one infantry division.

Stubborn battles also broke out for the Soviet troops to broaden the captured bridgeheads in the area of Magnuszew and Polawy. The Nazi Command, endeavoring at any price to recover the situation, in August increased the forces here, bringing up an additional 5 infantry divisions, 2 tank divisions and 2 infantry brigades.

Together with the field forces on the left wing of the First Belorussian Front, men of the 1st Polish Army under the command of Lt Gen Z. Berling, fought courageously.

Because of the increased enemy resistance, the falling behind to the rear services, the fatigue of the personnel and the necessity of replacements, the troops of the First Belorussian and First Ukrainian Fronts on 29 August, upon orders from Headquarters, went over to the defensive.

The formations of the Third Belorussian Front, having repelled a series of strong enemy counterstrikes, at the end of the month had reached the line of Raseynyay--Augustow and to the north of Augustow entered Poland.

The troops of the Second Belorussian Front on 17-25 July, also entered Polish territory. The first to cross the frontier were the 153d Rifle Division (commander, Col A. A. Shchennikov) and the III Guards Cavalry Corps (commander, Lt Gen N. S. Oslikovskiy). On 27 July, Bialystok was liberated and by the end of August the right wing of the troops had reached the Bobr and Narew Rivers on the section of Augustow--Lomza. On this line, according to a decision of Hq SHC, the front went over to the offensive. On 17 July, on the sector Jalowka--Bialowieza, Polish territory was entered by the troops of the 48th and 65th Armies which had been fighting on the right wing of the First Belorussian Front; these armies were under the command of Lt Gen P. A. Romanenko and Col Gen P. I. Batov.

With the reaching of the Narew and the Vistula by the Soviet troops, the eastern regions of Poland comprising 25 percent of the nation's territory had been cleared of Nazi occupiers and 5.5 million Soviet citizens had been freed from Nazi captivity. In the course of the battles to liberate the land to the east of the Vistula, the Soviet Armed Forces routed 14 Wehrmacht divisions and 1 brigade.

The Soviet soldiers fought courageously for the freedom of the Polish people. One of the numerous affirmations of this would be the feat of Guards Jr Lt A. V. Florenko who fought in one of the units of the First Belorussian Front. On 25 July 1944, he with his comrades in arms fought an uneven battle against 35 enemy tanks at Malinniki in Bialystok Wojewodstwo. Having destroyed several "Tigers," the courageous officer, being wounded, with a cluster of grenades in hand threw himself under a German tank and at a price of his life blocked the enemy's path. The Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet in an Ukase of 25 September 1944 posthumously awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union to Jr Lt Aleksey Vasil'yevich Florenko. One of the schools in Hajnowicy in Bialystok Wojewodstwo is named after him.<sup>10</sup>

In the summer of 1944, in stubborn battles for the liberation of the Polish people from Nazi occupation, 97,000 Soviet soldiers and officers gave up their lives and 340,000 persons were wounded.

The entry of the Soviet troops and the 1st Polish Army into Polish territory and their advance to the Vistula caused enormous joy in the population. The inhabitants of the towns and villages warmly welcomed the Soviet soldiers and expressed a feeling of profound gratitude for lifting the yoke of the German Nazis. The newspaper PRAVDA in those days wrote: "The population of the Polish towns and villages greeted the soldiers, officers and generals of the Red Army joyously and with a feeling of profound gratitude.... Along the roads over which the regiments are moving, crowds of people stand for entire days. They greet our tank troops and infantrymen with bouquets of flowers and offer fruit. In Lublin, Deblin, Pulawy and Garwolin, such meetings have turned into spontaneous demonstrations.... The Polish population and the Polish administration are collaborating actively and closely with the command of the Red Army. The Poles are helping the advancing troops catch the Germans who have fled in panic in the woods and fields and are repairing bridges and roads. The Polish partisans are also providing great aid to the advancing troops."<sup>11</sup>

The victories of the Soviet Armed Forces on the central sector of the Soviet-German Front in the second half of 1944 and the entry of Soviet troops into

Polish territory inspired the Polish workers to further intensify the national liberation struggle.

The Polish communists who headed this struggle organized active cooperation by the detachments of the partisan People's Army (AL)<sup>12</sup> and the advancing units of the Soviet Army. The Soviet troops liberated a total of 32 population points on Polish territory in close cooperation with the Polish partisans.<sup>13</sup>

On 21 July 1944, the Krajowa Rada Narodowa on liberated Polish land formed the first government in Polish history of the working masses headed by the working class, the Polish Committee of National Liberation (PKNO). In the liberated areas of Poland, regardless of the resistance of the reactionary underground, bodies of people's power were established, industry and transport were rebuilt, and the socioeconomic changes outlined by the July Manifesto of the PKNO were carried out.

Of great importance for strengthening the revolutionary forces in Poland was the agreement signed on 26 July 1944 in Moscow between the government of the USSR and the PKNO on relations between the Soviet Commander-in-Chief and the Polish administration after the entry of Soviet troops into Polish territory. In accord with this, the PKNO as the Polish lands were liberated fully assumed control over all affairs of the civil administration.<sup>14</sup>

Due to the efforts of the working class and the progressive intelligentsia and to the all-round aid of the Soviet Union, under the leadership of the PPR [Polish Workers Party] in a short period of time the population of the liberated regions were supplied with essential commodities, above all food products, and the management of enterprises was organized. In August-September 1944, all surviving enterprises were operating. During the first days after the liberation of the eastern regions of Poland, the Soviet Union helped supply their population with food, medicines and industrial goods. Soviet troops helped rebuild the railroads, telephone lines, to put power plants, water lines and industrial enterprises back into operation as well as bring in the harvest. Even in August 1944, the Soviet government granted the PKNO a loan of 3.5 million gold rubles and then 10 million rubles and 500,000 dollars.<sup>15</sup> From July through October 1944, the Soviet Union delivered Poland 45,000 tons of coal, 6,000 tons of kerosene and provided a credit totaling 36 million dollars.<sup>16</sup>

The heroism of the Soviet and Polish soldiers shown in the battles to liberate Poland and the Soviet-Polish fraternity in arms established during the war years serve as inexhaustible sources for indoctrinating the personnel of the Soviet Armed Forces and the Polish Army in a spirit of constant readiness to jointly defend socialism under present-day conditions.

"The Soviet Union, the Polish People's Republic and the other fraternal socialist countries," commented the member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee, the USSR Minister of Defense, Mar SU, Comrade D. F. Ustinov, "are undertaking joint measures to strengthen the defense alliance of the Warsaw Pact. The Soviet Armed Forces and the Polish Army born in the harsh years of the war stand firmly in its monolithic formation guarding the peace and security of the peoples of our countries. With high responsibility they are carrying out their patriotic and international duty."<sup>17</sup>

The friendship and mutual aid of the Warsaw Pact states have helped Poland to successfully surmount difficulties and confidently build a socialist society. "Socialist Poland," emphasizes the Political Declaration of Warsaw Pact States adopted in January 1983, "can always count on the moral, political and economic support of the fraternal socialist countries."<sup>18</sup>

#### FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [History of World War II of 1939-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 9, 1978, p 13.
- <sup>2</sup> I. V. Stalin, "O Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne Sovetskogo Soyuz" [On the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union], Moscow, Gospolitizdat, 1951, p 146.
- <sup>3</sup> "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy...", Vol 9, p 58.
- <sup>4</sup> "Partiyno-politicheskaya rabota v Vooruzhennykh Silakh SSSR, 1918-1973 gg." [Party Political Work in the USSR Armed Forces, 1918-1973. Historical Essay], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1974, p 234.
- <sup>5</sup> K. V. Kraynyukov, "Ot Dnepra do Visly" [From the Dnieper to the Vistula], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1971, pp 291-293.
- <sup>6</sup> "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy...", Vol 9, p 82.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp 87-90.
- <sup>8</sup> "Osvoboditel'naya missiya Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil vo vtoroy mirovoy voyne" [The Liberation Mission of the Soviet Armed Forces in World War II], Moscow, Politizdat, 1971, p 90.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid., p 91; "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy...", Vol 9, pp 59-60.
- <sup>10</sup> "Zyja v naszych sercach," Warsaw, 1975, pp 30-32.
- <sup>11</sup> PRAVDA, 2 August 1944.
- <sup>12</sup> The Armia Ludowa was established upon the initiative of the Polish Workers Party (PPR) as the armed organization of the underground parliament of the Polish people, the Krajowa Rada Narodowa (KRN). Its size by the summer of 1944 was around 60,000 men. See: "Bratstvo po oruzhiyu. [Fraternity in Arms]. Braterstwo broni," Moscow, Voenizdat, 1975, p 127.
- <sup>13</sup> "Sovetskiy Soyuz i bor'ba narodov Tsentral'noy i Yugo-Vostochnoy Yevropy za svobodu i nezavisimost'. 1941-1945 gg." [The Soviet Union and the Struggle of the Peoples of Central and Southeast Europe for Freedom and Independence, 1941-1945], Moscow, Nauka, 1978, p 50.
- <sup>14</sup> "Bratstvo po oruzhiyu...", p 156.

<sup>15</sup> "Sovetskiy Soyuz i bor'ba....," p 56.

<sup>16</sup> VOPROSY ISTORII, No 7, 1964, p 55.

<sup>17</sup> PRAVDA, 6 May 1984.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 7 January 1983.

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CSO: 1801/386

## POLITICAL WORK IN BLACK SEA AMPHIBIOUS LANDINGS ANALYZED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 7, Jul 84 (signed to press 21 Jun 84) pp 51-58

[Article by Vice Adm R. Likhvonin, military council member and chief of the Political Directorate of the Black Sea Fleet, and Capt 1st Rank (Res) G. Vaneyev, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor: "Party Political Work in Preparing and Landing Amphibious Forces (From the Experience of Combat Operations of the Black Sea Fleet During the Years of the Great Patriotic War)"]

[Text] From the first days of the Great Patriotic War the Black Sea Fleet co-operated closely with the formations and field forces of the ground troops. One of the important types of such cooperation was the fleet's participation in the preparations and landing of amphibious forces. As the experience of the war was to show, the achieving of the set goals by each of the landing forces depended largely upon the level and effectiveness of party political work with the focus, forms and methods of it being determined primarily by the content of the combat missions, the developing situation, the availability and experience of the political workers, the party and Komsomol activists.

As an example, let us take the landing of an amphibious force on 22 September 1941 at Grigoryevka. This was carried out simultaneously with a counterstrike made by units of the Maritime Army in the aim of stabilizing the situation of the Odessa Defensive Area. Preparations for it were carried out quickly and in strictest secrecy. In organizing party political work, consideration was also given to the fact that the landing force would be brought to the landing area initially on combat ships and then on landing craft. Two separate detachments were organized and in order to mislead the enemy these traveled from different points to the meeting point. It was essential to clearly allocate the forces, set out the necessary measures and carefully think through each of them. For this purpose the ships of the landing detachment carried workers from the squadron political section, Btlm Commissar Ya. G. Pochupaylo, the senior political instructors L. V. Malyshko and P. I. Makarov and the political instructor V. I. Yeremeyev. They all received preliminary instructions from the squadron military commissar, the Brig Commissar V. I. Semin. Along with him they discussed also the draft appeal to the naval infantrymen and the personnel of the ships and which reminded the men of the atrocities carried out by the Nazi invaders on Soviet land, told about the feats of the defenders of Odessa and explained the importance of the coming combat mission.

Arriving on the ships, the experienced political workers helped the commanders draw up plans for the political support of the landing and man the teams of the launches and longboats. Their activities were skillfully directed by the deputy chief of the fleet political directorate, Brig Commissar M. P. Tkachenko, who was on the cruiser "Krasnyy Krym." He gave particular attention to individual work and demanded that each soldier know what he should do during the loading, the move at sea and the actions on shore. The importance of such talks (group and individual) became apparent during the preliminary training. The personnel of the landing force (the 3d Naval Infantry Regiment which had been recently organized) in its majority was insufficiently prepared for nighttime combat operations.

The combat mission was issued more specifically at sea, after leaving Sevastopol. This was aided by the appeals of the command to the crew members of the vessels and to the naval infantrymen. The appeals were drawn up in such a manner as to concisely give the necessary tasks, inspire the men to successfully carry them out and instill confidence in victory in everyone.

For example, the appeal of the command of the 3d Regiment and the cruiser "Krasnyy Krym" was extensive and moving. It gave the main mission set by the military council of the Black Sea Fleet of "helping the heroic defenders...of sunny Odessa."<sup>1</sup> "By a rapid rush of the landing force and by a powerful attack in the Nazi back," it went on, "let us defeat the enemy in its positions and throw it back from our Odessa."<sup>2</sup> More specific tasks were also given in the form of orders and instructions.

On the very same evening on board the cruiser "Krasnyy Krym," a party meeting was held for the communists of the 3d Naval Infantry Regiment. In the adopted decision they promised to be examples of steadfastness, courage and valor and by their personal example and high discipline to lead the men in successfully carrying out the order of the command.<sup>3</sup>

Both the appeal, the party meeting, the talks and also other measures significantly strengthened the feeling of responsibility among the officers, petty officers and enlisted men and further raised their morale. On one of the ships the commander of the 3d Regiment, Capt K. M. Koren', was approached by Jr Lt I. D. Charupa.

"Comrade captain!" he said. "When you gave us the combat mission you urged us to act unstintingly and boldly. Each of us will do this. In my regiment every man has requested to be in the first wave."

The company of I. D. Charupa was put among the subunits of the first wave. It was one of the first to load into the longboats and one of the first to land on the shore. Its offensive zeal was bold and daring.

The naval infantrymen succeeded in capturing a small beachhead. The landing of the basic forces of the party however was held up because the detachment of landing craft had been unable to arrive at the meeting point on time. Then they decided until it arrived to carry out the landing directly from the combat ships using their few boats.

During those intense evening hours the commanders, political workers, the party and Komsomol activists were able to organize and control the men so that everyone acted quickly, smoothly and without excess rush. This ensured the maximum possible landing rate in the unforeseen conditions. The personal example of the communists was the basic form of party political work. They were the first to jump out of the overloaded longboats into the water and under enemy fire made their way to the shore. Their self-possession and self-sacrifice inspired the remaining men, they did not allow them to grow weak-hearted, they strengthened tenacity and multiplied the forces. The commissar of the 3d Naval Infantry Regiment, Btln Commissar I. A. Slesarev, was constantly at the most dangerous place. The battalion commander, Sr Lt I. F. Matviyenko, was wounded three times by mine shrapnel but continued to lead his men.

In steadily widening the beachhead, the landing on which was significantly accelerated by the arrival of the landing craft detachment, the landing force by the evening of 22 September had linked up with the subunits of the 157th and 421st Rifle Divisions. Thus, as a result of the combined attacks by the ground units from the front and the amphibious landing from the rear, the enemy troops in the area of the population points of Chebanka, Staraya and Novaya Dofinovka and the Sovkhoz imeni K. Ye. Voroshilov were in part destroyed and in part thrown back several kilometers to the northeast of Odessa.<sup>4</sup>

The political workers, the party and Komsomol activists skillfully made use of any convenient moment for raising the morale of the men. Here is an example. After the successful combat of the landing force, the naval scouts beyond the village of Chebanka discovered a long-range battery abandoned by the fleeing Nazis. The still warm barrels of its foreguns were aimed at Odessa. Somewhat later, along with other captured equipment, the battery was pulled through the city. The cannons themselves, possibly, did not make any particular impression on the defenders of the city but the large inscriptions written on each of them "We Will No Longer Fire on Odessa!" caused the passers-by to stop, they caused happy smiles and lifted the mood. Lively conversations and spontaneous brief meetings broke out at places where the captured battery stopped.

The experience of party political work in preparing for and landing the tactical amphibious force at Grigoryevka was generalized by the Political Directorate of the Black Sea Fleet and widely used in the course of subsequent combat operations.

For example, party political work was instructively and intensely carried out in the preparations for and in the course of the Kerch-Feodosiya Landing Operation (25 December 1941--2 January 1942). In the aims of increasing its effectiveness, the fleet military council established an operations group headed by the chief of the political directorate, Div Commissar P. T. Bondarenko. Everyone who was a member of it received instructions from the military council member, Div Commissar I. I. Izarov. The difficulty of the preparatory period was that it was essential to covertly concentrate the ships and vessels at the loading points, to further equip them (particularly boats mobilized from the civilian fleet) and organize navigational-hydrographic, engineer, logistical, medical and other types of support. The carrying out of these tasks was reinforced by the appropriate party-political measures. Thus, in individual and group talks, the combat mission was given to the personnel in general outlines without

giving the target and place of landing of the force. In order to mislead the enemy agents with a possible leaking of information, all the work of the crew members of the ships and vessels and the specialists of the shops engaged in reequipping the transports was carried out under the pretext of preparing to send the troops to Sevastopol. Particular attention was given to the ships and vessels being manned by civilians and there were many of them. The Azov Naval Flotilla alone mobilized 77 seiners, 176 flatboats and longboats of the civilian fleet.<sup>5</sup> Party and Komsomol organizations or party groups were organized in the detachments and on the vessels and agitators appointed. The activists were carefully instructed on the particular features of party political work in the individual stages of the operation.

The operations group of the political directorate worked out a special directive, having determined in it the tasks for the political bodies, the party and Komsomol organizations in the forthcoming operation. It also prepared and sent out to the political sections printed appeals, leaflets and slogans. In addition to the directive, a detailed plan of party political work was drawn up. One of its sections defined the subjects of lectures, reports and talks for the various categories of the landing force participants and envisaged the publishing of appeals, leaflets and instructions together with the army political sections. All measures were aimed at propagandizing examples of the heroism and self-sacrifice of the Black Sea sailors. They should further raise the morale of the men, instill confidence in success in them and strengthen the desire to completely carry out their military duty. Work on the spot was organized in accord with this plan. Thus, the squadron political section conducted a meeting for the landing force officers where they analyzed the experience of the amphibious landing at Odessa. Several informational reports on events on the fronts of the war were given to them. An agitator seminar was held. Here they heard reports on the combat activities of the Black Sea Fleet and the importance of the amphibious operations and they were told of the atrocities of the Nazis committed against the captured and wounded Soviet soldiers. For talks with the personnel the agitators were issued previously prepared materials. The enlisted men were given lectures on revolutionary vigilance and the maintaining of military secrecy and on the actions of the soldiers in the landing of other amphibious forces in the course of the war. The "Instructions to a Soldier Fighting as Part of a Landing Force" were published in a mass run. The appeals of a squadron command to the personnel of the landing units and to the members of the ship crews were distributed and collectively discussed.

Prior to the loading of the force on the vessels and ships, party and Komsomol meetings were held everywhere. The communists and Komsomol members who spoke at them vowed to honorably carry out their sacred duty to the motherland and to fight unstintingly and boldly.

During the crossing at sea, the commanders and political workers gave the personnel the combat missions in greater detail and explained to them the true aims of the operation, the precise place and time of the landing. Attention was drawn to strengthening combat friendship between the sailors and the men of the army subunits. The naval infantrymen were carefully instructed who were to land in the first wave. They were explained the necessity of quickly and decisively crossing the coastal strip and capturing a beachhead on the shore as well as mutual aid and help for one another in combat. The ships and vessels widely

used visual agitation, in particular the slogans: "Let Us Have a Sunny Crimea!" "Our Attack Against the Nazis is Help for the People of Sevastopol!" "Do Not Defame the Glory of the Black Sea Sailors!" "Death to the Nazis!" and others.

The active party political work helped to raise the fighting spirit and morale of the personnel. Many soldiers voiced a desire to make the landing as communists. Thus, just on the cruiser "Krasnyy Krym" 18 Red Navymen and petty officers submitted requests to join as party members and candidate members.<sup>6</sup>

Subsequently, when the military council and political directorate of the Black Sea Fleet summed up the results of party political work in the landing operation, mistakes were noted made in the preparatory period and in the sea crossing of the landing force. For example, certain political sections as well as commanders and military commissars of the detachments planned many measures without considering the time factor, the state of the weather and their capabilities. Not everything that was done reached its goal.

The most crucial stage of the operation was the landing of the force and this was carried out under bad weather conditions. The Azov Sea was very stormy and the Kerch Strait was plugged with broken ice. A gusty wind, sometimes reaching 7 points, had raised large waves. These washed over the towed vessels while the surf impeded the approach to shore. Under these conditions a great role was played by the combat appeal of the commander, the political worker, the communist and Komsomol worker and their personal tenacity and intrepidity. The basic task of party political work in landing and in the combat to seize the beachhead was precisely to ensure the leading role of the communists and Komsomol members. And this task was successfully carried out. Here are several examples.

The minesweeper "Sovetskaya Rossiya" under the command of Capt-Lt N. A. Shatayev, in being fired on by the enemy, was approaching the northern coast of the Kerch Peninsula. Due to the bad weather it was impossible to come right up to the shore. Then the ship's military commissar, the political instructor K. K. Koz'min and several Red Navymen jumped overboard and fastened the mooring lines. Then, standing in the icy water, they helped 450 men land as well as unload three tanks and four guns.

Also acting decisively was the crew of the torpedo boat of Sr Lt V. G. Kolomiyets with the landing group of Maj I. K. Lopata. A large wave carried the boat onto the shore and many of those who were on it ended up in the water. Under enemy fire, they made their way to a stone barn standing not far off and took up the offensive. The battle with the besieging Nazis lasted the entire day. Many of our soldiers, including the commander of the boat, died a heroic death. By the end of the day just two of them remained alive, Maj I. K. Lopata and the Red Navyman N. Ye. Sumtsov. Under the cover of night on the third day they made their way to Kamysh-Burun and joined up with their troops.<sup>7</sup>

Feodosiya was the main point of the landing. Here also the communists and Komsomol members showed examples of heroism and courage. On one of the main caliber guns of the cruiser "Krasnyy Krym" a fragment of a Nazi shell pierced the fastenings of the sight receiving instruments. It was impossible to fire at

the enemy. Then the battery petty officer, the communist, WO ["michman"] S. I. Bakalov climbed on top of the gun shield, fell prone and holding in his hands the wire from the aiming instruments, lay there until the firing stopped.<sup>8</sup> On this same ship a cannon crew was knocked out by the exploding of a shell. The gunner, Komsomol member T. G. Grib, wounded in the leg, remained at his post. In disregarding the pain, he alone for almost 2 hours fired at the Nazis until he lost consciousness.<sup>9</sup>

The successful conclusion of the Kerch-Feodosiya Operation was largely aided by the well-organized party political work. A positive feature in this was the establishing of an operations group of the political directorate, the precise planning in carrying out the designated measures, the preliminary preparation of visual agitation and ensuring individual work of the aktiv (instruction sections, talks and reports, the issuing of appeals to the personnel, the publishing of leaflets, instructions, slogans, posters and so forth).<sup>10</sup>

In truth, party political work in the Kerch-Feodosiya Landing Operation could have been more effective if the army and navy political bodies and political workers had given more attention to joint measures and provided strong and constant coordination. Thus, there was a lack of coordination in the efforts of the political directorates of the Transcaucasian Front and Black Sea Fleet. There was no joint directive on the organization of party political work in the operation and a unified plan of measures for the army and navy political bodies.<sup>11</sup> The operations group of the political directorate restricted its activities to just the preparatory period, although the crossing at sea and the battle for the landing required closer attention. The political sections of the Azov Naval Flotilla and the Kerch Naval Base had been unable to organize prompt information on the combat successes and examples of heroism. There were also shortcomings in the delivery of newspapers and magazines to the ships. The political section of the Azov Naval Flotilla published its newspaper far away from the base and it did not reach the operational units and ships.<sup>12</sup> Certain political sections received leaflets on the third day after their publishing and the subunits even later.<sup>13</sup> At times there was not proper supervision of the work done by the rear organizations in the area of logistic support for the ships and units, in providing prompt medical aid to the wounded and in organizing their food en route.<sup>14</sup>

In each of the following landing operations, the experience of party political work arising out of the creativity and initiative of the masses was acquired and accumulated. Thus, in the period of preparing for the landing on Myskhako (February 1943) and Novorossiysk (September 1943), there was the widespread practice of the taking of oaths.

"We dedicate our will, our forces and our blood, drop by drop, to the life and happiness of our people, to you, ardently beloved motherland"--were the words said at a meeting of the personnel of the landing detachment of Maj Ts. L. Kuni-kov.<sup>15</sup>

Written personal oaths directed to the motherland and the party became widespread in the move at sea and in breaks between battles on the shore. Thus, on the Malaya Zemlya beachhead, the Red Navyman of the 83d Naval Infantry Brigade A. I. Sukhorukov before the last battle wrote: "In the event of my death, do

not forget me, as a candidate party member. I have given up everything for the party, and I have been honest to the people and my motherland. Avenge me, dear friends! I ask you to inform my relatives that I die for the motherland, for the people, as a patriot of the fatherland."<sup>16</sup> In a heavy battle A. I. Sukhorukov died a hero's death.

High effectiveness was characteristic of the party political work conducted in the Novorossiysk Operation (9-16 September 1943), particularly in the landing of the party at Novorossiysk. The fleet political directorate and the political section of the 18th Army, in considering the acquired experience, devoted great attention to ensuring a close tie between the army and navy political bodies in all stages of carrying out the forthcoming task. At sessions of the army and fleet military councils, a single directive was adopted on joint political work in the units and on the ships.<sup>17</sup> It made provision for all political workers to study the reviews and documents which generalized the experience of party political work in the landing of amphibious forces, and to avoid the previous mistakes, required the establishing of close contact between the army and navy political sections and the dependable exchange of timely combat information and the carrying out of joint measures. In contrast to the Kerch-Feodosiya Landing Operation, the landing of the force in Novorossiysk was made from small ships and vessels and for this reason the role of individual work was greater.

Printed propaganda was of exceptionally important significance. In line with this, during the period of preparing for the Novorossiysk Operation, the fleet political directorate and the political section of the 18th Army issued a large number of instructions, leaflets, appeals and so forth.

Informative materials during the period of preparations for the landing of the forces on Myskhako and at Novorossiysk were also to be found in the large-run newspapers of the fleet formations. Extensive use was also made of the lower-level press, primarily the Red Navy wall newspapers and combat leaflets which helped to create a high political upsurge and offensive mood in the personnel. Thus, in the course of the preparations for the landing, in the detachment of Maj Ts. L. Kunikov, some 27 combat leaflets were issued.<sup>18</sup> These urged the men to make a detailed study not only of their weapons but also the enemy weapons and to observe discipline and organization in loading on the ship and during the crossing at sea.

The propagandizing of heroic feats was one of the important moments of party political work. In the landing on Myskhako and at Novorossiysk, this was carried out particularly effectively and promptly. For example, the fleet political directorate issued leaflets describing the combat deeds of the torpedo boat commander, Sr Lt Ivan Khabarov, the gunner, Sr Sn Aleksandr Fedchuk and PO 1st Class Fedor Rubakho as well as leaflets on the collective feat "Honor and Glory to the Sailors of the Torpedo Boats!" "Glory to the Hero Sailors of the MO Boats!" "Glory to the Hero Sailors of the Motor Boats and Longboats!" "Glory to the Guards Assault Troops!" and others. On the Malaya Zemlya beachhead in the 83d Naval Infantry Brigade, hand-written leaflets with the photographs of the men were very popular and in the 255th Brigade, the artistic literary journal of the brigade political section POLUNDRA. Materials for the journal were willingly prepared by the commanders and political workers of the battalions and companies as well as the officers and petty officers of the political section.

The journal was very popular with the sailors. It was handed around and read with great interest. The materials published in POLUNDRA stirred the thoughts of the men and caused a desire to imitate the heroes.

In preparing for and in the landing of amphibious forces, an important place was held by propagandizing and explaining the demands of the military regulations and establishing in the minds of the men an awareness of the need for high discipline and the accurate and unswerving fulfillment of orders. The questions of discipline were included in the subject of political information sessions and, if the situation permitted, also in lectures and reports.

Great attention was given to instilling in the personnel a hate for Naziism and a feeling of sacred revenge. Here the oral and printed propaganda was widely employed. In the course of the Novorossiysk Operation, one of the leaflets published a letter from the mother of a killed Red Navyman, Gennadiy Merzlyakov, to his combat comrades. "My dear sons," the woman wrote, "The news of the heroic death of my own beloved son has caused me much grief. My maternal heart is broken by pain and anger. If you only knew how my hate for the base Nazis boiled.... So avenge, my sons, the death of your combat friend, avenge my grief, avenge all the evils which they create in our land. Be brave in battle against the enemy! Exterminate it unmercifully."

The rich experience in party political work gained in the landing on Myskhako and Novorossiysk was also useful in the Kerch-Eltigen Landing Operation (November-December 1943). We should particularly note the joint meetings of the personnel from the landing force and the ships conducted several hours before the loading onto the ships and vessels. Here they discussed the appeal of the military council of the Northern Caucasus Front.<sup>19</sup> These were carried out with great enthusiasm. The men vowed to fully carry out their duty to the motherland. Here also the men of the forward detachments who had already proved themselves to be courageous and bold were presented with red flags with the order of erecting them in the population points of the Crimea freed of the enemy. The presentation of governmental awards to those who had distinguished themselves in previous battles greatly inspired the members of the ship crews and the naval infantrymen. These and other measures had a great mobilizing effect. The men of the landing force in an unrestrainable desire to clear the homeland of the hated invaders and inspired by the passionate words and personal example of the commanders, the political workers, the party and Komsomol activists, showed mass heroism. Thus, in the 386th Naval Infantry Battalion, 12 men<sup>20</sup> received the title of Hero of the Soviet Union and many were awarded various combat decorations.

Thus, in carrying out the military policy of the Communist Party, the commanders and political workers, the political bodies, the party and Komsomol organizations of the Black Sea Fleet conducted purposeful party political work which was an important means in raising the morale of the sailors, their tenacity, discipline, bravery and fighting skill. Its content was determined by the combat missions and by the specific situation. The more complex these were the more attention given to the organizing of party political work. In the course of the landing of amphibious parties such forms of party political work as party and Komsomol meetings, joint meetings of the personnel of the ships and landing forces, lectures, reports, the group reading of newspapers, the issuing of

combat leaflets, express leaflets and so forth underwent a thorough check and fully confirmed their importance. The naval press with new strength proved itself to be a collective propagandist, agitator and organizer. The personal example of the communists and Komsomol members, primarily the commanders and political workers, was of particular importance in combat.

The experience gained in the war years is carefully being studied at present. All the best in it is being used and developed in the interests of further improving party political work in the fleet and in the interests of increasing its combat readiness.

#### FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> "Boytsy vspominayut minuvshiye dni" [Fighters Recall Past Days], Odessa, Mayak, 1964, p 185.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> "Partiyno-politicheskaya rabota v Vooruzhennykh Silakh SSSR v gody Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny 1941-1945 gg." [Party Political Work in the USSR Armed Forces During the Years of the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945], Part I, Book 1, Moscow, Izd. Glavnogo politicheskogo upravleniya Sovetskoy Armii i Voenno-Morskogo Flota, 1959, p 284.
- <sup>4</sup> TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 228, inv. 2833, file 16, sheet 284-287.
- <sup>5</sup> "Partiyno-politicheskaya rabota...", Part I, Book 2, p 161.
- <sup>6</sup> A. I. Zubkov, "Kerchensko-Feodosiyskaya desantnaya operatsiya" [The Kerch-Feodosiya Landing Operation], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1974, p 62.
- <sup>7</sup> "Boyevyye podvigi chermortsev" [Combat Feats of the Black Sea Fleet Sailors], No 8, Sevastopol, Izd. PU ChF, 1942, pp 10-11.
- <sup>8</sup> "Boyevyye podvigi krasnoflotsev v Otechestvennoy voyne" [Combat Feats of the Red Navymen in the Patriotic War], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1945, pp 9-10.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>10</sup> This work was carried out most effectively by the Political Section of the 44th Army and the Fleet Political Directorate. See: TsVMA [Central Naval Archives], folio 109, file 23370, sheets 7-9.
- <sup>11</sup> "Partiyno-politicheskaya rabota...", Part I, Book 2, p 171.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>14</sup> TsVMA, folio 109, file 23412, sheet 35.

- <sup>15</sup> N. Starshinov, "Zarevo nad volnami" [A Glow Over the Waves], Simferopol, Tavriya, 1971, p 59.
- <sup>16</sup> TsAMO, folio 1890, inv. 1, file 40, sheet 37.
- <sup>17</sup> "Partiyno-politicheskaya rabota v Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Silakh v gody Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny 1941-1945" [Party Political Work in the Soviet Armed Forces During the Years of the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1968, p 311.
- <sup>18</sup> TsVMA, folio 11, inv. 2, file 681, sheet 55.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid., folio 10, file 10724, sheets 42-45.
- <sup>20</sup> "Boyevoy put' Sovetskogo Voenno-Morskogo Flota" [Campaign Record of the Soviet Navy], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1974, pp 372-373.

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CSO: 1801/386

## WORLD WAR II ACTIVITIES OF MAR F. I. TOLBUKHIN REVIEWED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 7, Jul 84 (signed to press 21 Jun 84) pp 59-63

[Article by Candidate of Military Sciences, Docent, Maj Gen F. Oleynikov: "The Organizational Abilities and Military Talent of Mar SU F. I. Tolbukhin (On the Occasion of the 90th Anniversary of His Birthday\*)"]

[Text] Fedor Ivanovich Tolbukhin devoted his entire adult life to military affairs. During World War I, he was a motorcyclist private and after completing warrant officer ["praporshchik"] school participated in battles on the Northwestern and Southwestern Fronts where he was in command of a company and battalion. During the Civil War, he successively held the positions of military leader of the Sandyrev and Shagotsk volost commissariats in Yaroslavl Province, deputy and then chief of staff of a rifle division, chief of the operation section of the army staff, while also participating in battles against the White Guards on the Northern and Western Fronts.

The organizational abilities of the future marshal were clearly apparent in the summer of 1920, in the course of defeating the White Poles in the interfluvium of the Narva and Western Bug. Heading a small group of staff workers of the 56th Rifle Division and around a score cavalymen, he made a daring raid on the enemy which was superior by many fold and led out the surrounded units of his formation and for this the Soviet government awarded him the Order of the Red Banner.

For F. I. Tolbukhin the peacetime years were years of development, theoretical growth and formation as a major military leader. In 1927 and 1930, he completed the advanced training courses for superior command personnel and in 1934, the Military Academy imeni M. V. Frunze. From November 1930, Fedor Ivanovich headed the staffs of the I and then the XIX Rifle Corps, from September 1937 he was in command of the 72d Rifle Division and in July 1938, was appointed chief of staff of the Transcaucasian Military District. In all of this F. I. Tolbukhin showed high organizational abilities for the combat training of the troops and for indoctrinating the personnel in total dedication to their people and the Leninist party a member of which he had become in 1938.

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\* For a biography of F. I. Tolbukhin, see: VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 6, 1964, pp 122-124.

Under the conditions of the deteriorating international situation prior to World War II, F. I. Tolbukhin made a thorough study of the mountainous theater of the Transcaucasus. The entire staff of the Transcaucasian Military District was involved in intense activities. Its administrations and sections were constantly being shaped in the staff drills and command-staff exercises. The workday of Fedor Ivanovich was sharply extended. He traveled all the militarily important routes and border areas, he inspected the billeting conditions of the troops, the passability of the roads and the inaccessible footpaths and studied the nature of the mountain passes and the local material resources. He devoted a good deal of attention to organizing troop command and control.

The indefatigable energy, the professionalism and high organizational abilities of F. I. Tolbukhin were properly regarded by the government and superior military command. In 1938, he was awarded the Order of the Red Star, the Jubilee Medal "Twenty Years of the RKKA [Worker-Peasant Red Army]" and given the next military rank of divisional commander.

With the outbreak of the Great Patriotic War, F. I. Tolbukhin successively held the positions of the chief of staff of the Transcaucasian Military District, the Transcaucasian, Caucasian and Crimean Fronts, and the deputy commander of the Stalingrad Military District. From July 1942, he was in command of the 57th and then the 68th Armies. Over this time, as subsequently, his organizational abilities and generalship were particularly apparent. Under the leadership of Fedor Ivanovich, the 57th Army over a period of 3 months conducted heavy defensive battles at Stalingrad and, as a rule, successfully repelled the superior enemy forces, and then went over to an offensive with an insignificant general superiority over the enemy in men and weapons (approximately 1.2-fold for personnel, 1.3-fold for tanks and 1.8-fold for guns and mortars<sup>1</sup>). In recalling this period, the then commander of the Red Army artillery N. N. Voronov wrote: "...We visited the 57th Army which was nearest to the city and under the command of Gen F. I. Tolbukhin. We knew him well from joint service in the Leningrad Military District and had frequently met at meetings, military games and exercises. I respected Fedor Ivanovich for his remarkable mind, great knowledge and the ability to work and organize the work of his subordinates. He had a good knowledge of staff service and good administrative skills."<sup>2</sup>

The military leadership activities of F. I. Tolbukhin in the Stalingrad Battle were recognized by awarding him with the Order of Suvorov 1st Degree and the next military rank of lieutenant general.

In March 1943, Fedor Ivanovich was appointed the commander of the Southern Front. The previously acquired combat experience, a good knowledge of Soviet military art and the nature of enemy combat operations and a constant search for and improvement in the forms and methods of preparing and conducting the operations made it possible for the commander of the Southern Front to carefully organize and in cooperation with the Southwestern Front (commander, Army Gen R. Ya. Malinovskiy) to successfully carry out the Donbas Offensive Operation (13 August-22 September 1943), and then the Melitopol Front Offensive Operation (26 September-5 November 1943).

A characteristic feature of these operations was that the troops of the Southern Front had to break through the previously prepared defensive lines along the

Mius, Krynka and Kalmius Rivers. In the course of the operation, F. I. Tolbukhin made wide use of the Guards II and IV Mechanized Corps and the IV Cavalry Corps for operations in the enemy rear and this led to a disrupting of the enemy defenses in depth and facilitated the advance of the front's main forces.

In the Melitopol Operation, the commander of the front and his staff demonstrated an instructive example of shifting the basic efforts from the main sector (to the north of Melitopol) to a secondary one for exploiting the success apparent there. The maneuvering of the 51st Army of Lt Gen Ya. G. Kreyzer, the XIX Tank and IV Guards Cavalry Corps and the committing of them to battle to the south of Melitopol significantly facilitated the liberation of the city (23 October) and made it possible to rapidly develop the offensive.

From October 1943, F. I. Tolbukhin was in command of the Fourth Ukrainian Front and from May 1944 until the war's end, the Third Ukrainian Front. In these positions his organizational abilities and military talent were particularly apparent. In August 1944, the Third Ukrainian Front together with the Second Ukrainian Front had covertly prepared and successfully carried out the Iasi-Kishinev Operation during which the Soviet troops surrounded and destroyed the basic forces of the Army Group Southern Ukraine and under the conditions of a difficult mountainous-wooded theater of war continued to rapidly develop the offensive deep into Romanian territory.

The operations to liberate the countries of Southwestern Europe from the Nazi yoke hold a special place in the military biography of Fedor Ivanovich Tolbukhin. The troops of the Third Ukrainian Front under his command participated in the liberation of Romania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Hungary and Austria. Here F. I. Tolbukhin showed exceptional talents in solving difficult military and administrative questions. Thus, in determining the overall plan of the Bulgarian Operation, F. I. Tolbukhin considered all aspects of a political and operational-strategic nature in the country and in the aim of avoiding bloodshed on 7 September 1944 appealed to the Bulgarian people. The appeal stated: "The Red Army does not intend to fight the Bulgarian people and its army, as it considers the Bulgarian people a fraternal people. The Red Army has one mission of defeating the Germans and accelerating the arrival of universal peace."<sup>3</sup>

The operation commenced without artillery and air softening up and with a decisive and rapid advance by the forward mobile detachments and then the main forces. The soldiers of the Bulgarian Army sided with their people and joyfully greeted the Soviet troops. In September 1944, F. I. Tolbukhin was appointed the chairman of the Allied Control Commission in Bulgaria and carried out his duties with dignity.

In the Belgrad Operation the plan for which was worked out by the command of the Third Ukrainian Front, the Army Group Serbia was defeated and a significant portion of the Army Group E was routed. The capital of Yugoslavia and a larger portion of Serbian territory were liberated. In the course of the offensive, the questions of cooperation of the Soviet troops with the Yugoslav and Bulgarian armies were successfully resolved.

In the course of the Budapest Operation, instructive were the operations of the troops of the Third Ukrainian Front to encircle a major enemy grouping together with the Second Ukrainian Front and to repel the strong enemy counterstrikes undertaken in the aim of relieving the surrounded troops and restoring the defenses along the Danube.

The high military skill of F. I. Tolbukhin was also apparent in the preparations and course of the Balaton Operation (6-15 March 1945). This operation was a model of the high organization and conduct of an operational defensive by the forces of one front on two distant sectors, the skillful maneuvering of the second echelons, reserves and artillery, the skillful configuration of anti-tank defenses and the massed employment of aviation.

Fedor Ivanovich always worked extensively and productively, not considering the time or his health, and set an example for his subordinates in his indefatigability and keenness. A distinguishing feature of his work was that he always did everything steadily, calmly and without rush. The former chief of staff of the Third Ukrainian Front, Mar SU S. S. Biryuzov, recalled after the war:

"Fedor Ivanovich Tolbukhin, according to my notions then, was already elderly, that is, around 50 years of age. Tall, stout, with large but pleasant facial features, he made an impression of a very kind man. Subsequently I had an opportunity to be completely convinced of this, as of another very characteristic quality of Tolbukhin, his external unflappability and calmness. I do not recall a single instance when he lost his temper. For this reason, it is not surprising that Fedor Ivanovich frankly voiced his dislike for excessively hot-headed people...."<sup>4</sup>

For successful combat operations the troops under the command of F. I. Tolbukhin 34 times were commended in orders of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief. He was awarded the military rank of Marshal of the Soviet Union on 12 September 1944 by an Ukase of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet for high military skill and the successful carrying out of large-scale operations.<sup>5</sup> Fedor Ivanovich was awarded the Order of Victory, a monument was erected to him in Moscow while his name was given to one of the rifle divisions and the Higher Officers School of Self-Propelled Artillery. The town of Dobrich in Bulgaria was renamed the town of Tolbukhin, while the village of Davydkovo in Yaroslavl Oblast became the village of Tolbukhino. Commemorative plaques have been put up in the buildings of the Military Academy imeni M. V. Frunze and the staff of the Transcaucasian Military District in the memory of the military leader.

In noting the outstanding accomplishments of Mar SU F. I. Tolbukhin in defeating the Nazi troops in the Great Patriotic War, he was posthumously awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union by an Ukase of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet on the day of the 20th anniversary of victory.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> "Operatsii Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne" [Operations of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Great Patriotic War], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 2, 1958, p 42.

<sup>2</sup> N. N. Voronov, "Na sluzhbe voyennoy" [In Military Service], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1963, p 258.

<sup>3</sup> "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [History of World War II of 1939-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 9, 1978, p 125.

<sup>4</sup> S. S. Biryuzov, "Kogda gremeli pushki" [When the Guns Thundered], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1961, p 147.

<sup>5</sup> The military rank of colonel general was awarded to F. I. Tolbukhin on 28 April 1943, and that of army general on 21 September 1943.

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CSO: 1801/386

ARCHIVAL POLITICAL REPORTS ON BELORUSSIAN OPERATION PUBLISHED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 7, Jul 84 (signed to press 21 Jun 84) pp 64-67

[Archival materials prepared by Col I. Yaroshenko and Lt Col V. Kovalev: "Liberating the Belorussian Land"]

[Text] In the battles for the liberation of Belorussia, the Soviet soldiers with the sole desire of rapidly defeating the Nazi invaders showed high military skill and mass heroism. This can be seen from the political reports published below written by the chiefs of the political directorates of the Third Belorussian and First Baltic Fronts.

From the Political Report of the Chief of the Political Directorate of the Third Belorussian Front to the Chief of the Main Political Directorate of the Red Army of 4 July 1944

The troops of the front are conducting successful offensive battles. The privates, sergeants and officers, in line with the new significant victories of the troops of the front and the Red Army over the Nazi invaders, are united by the single desire of defeating the Nazi invaders as quickly as possible, expelling them from the Soviet land and catching the wounded Nazi beast in its own lair, in Germany.

A vivid indicator of the high political-moral state of the personnel of the front is the fact that in the battles against the Nazi invaders, the privates, sergeants and officers have shown exceptional heroism, courage and valor.

A group of scouts from the 371st Rifle Division totaling 8 men led by Sr Sgt Kabanov, in carrying out a combat mission, in maneuvering skillfully and utilizing advantageous routes of advance, surprise attacked the defending enemy. The courageous scouts destroyed 30 Nazis and captured 47.

A scout from this same formation Yusupov over a single day destroyed 7 Nazis, capturing 9 and delivering them to the unit staff.

In carrying out a combat mission, the tank platoon commander from the 19th Guards Tank Brigade, Komsomol member Bernov rushed forward on his tank and by firing the cannon and machine gun cut down many retreating Nazis. Having spotted an ambush of two self-propelled and four antitank cannons on the edge of

the forest, Bernov boldly and decisively headed his vehicle toward the ambush. Firing on the move, Bernov set fire to both self-propelled guns and with the tracks of his tank crushed the antitank cannons along with their personnel. Tankman Bernov in this battle was wounded, one enemy shell jammed the tank turret but he did not leave battle until the complete destruction and rout of the ambush.

A group of ground attack planes from the 1st Guards Ground Attack Air Division led by Maj Kondakov, in the area of Gorbatshevichi--Kopishcha, attacked the enemy. At a low-level flight the pilots made six passes and destroyed 45 motor vehicles with infantry and freight, including 5 vehicles carrying fuel which exploded, and destroyed up to 25 wagons with military supplies.

The pilots Katsur and Moskovento who carried out the combat mission were attacked by four enemy aircraft. Katsur and Moskovento successfully conducted air combat, they each shot down one enemy aircraft and precisely and promptly carried out the combat mission given them....

The high political-moral state of the front's troops can also be seen from the fact that during the period of active combat operations there was a significant increase in the number of applications received from the privates, sergeants and officers by the party organizations with the request to admit them to the ranks of the VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)]. For example, over 2,000 applications were submitted during 23 and 24 June to the party organizations of the units from the 11th Guards Army. The primary party organizations of the 2/7th Guards Rifle Regiment of the 91st Guards Rifle Division received 53 applications. The party organizations of the 164th Rifle Division during 2 days of fighting admitted 65 men to the party ranks. In one day the privates, sergeants and officers submitted 120 applications with a request to admit them to the VKP(b) ranks to the party organizations of the units of the III Guards Cavalry Corps.

The personal example set by the communists in combat has had a great influence on the non-party soldiers and has helped to develop offensive zeal and to further strengthen the political and moral state. For example, the company party organizer Mironov, in receiving a concussion, categorically refused to go to the medical unit, having told the men: "I will remain in formation until the battle mission is fully carried out." The soldiers, inspired by the courageous conduct of the party organizer, rushed forward and captured an enemy line of trenches without a halt.

Communists from the 2d Rifle Company of the 61st Guards Rifle Regiment of the 19th Guards Rifle Division by their personal example inspired the men to rapidly cross the Luchesa River. The personnel from this company were the first in the formation to cross the river.

The gun crew of communist Makhov (26th Guards Artillery Regiment of the 17th Guards Rifle Division), regardless of heavy enemy fire, by direct laying accurately fired at the enemy firing positions and supported the advance of our infantry.

Exceptionally courageous in combat were the VKP(b) members the tankmen of the 28th Separate Guards Tank Brigade, the tank commander, Guards Jr Lt Pershin, the tank commander, Guards Jr Lt Sobdenov and the tank commander, Guards Jr Lt Simon. They boldly moved forward on their combat vehicles. Panic broke out in the Nazi ranks with the appearance of the tanks. In benefiting from the enemy confusion, the tank troops quickly broke through to the Luchesa River and promptly supported the crossing of all the tanks to the western bank of the river....

Acting Chief of the Political Directorate of the Third Belorussian Front,  
Maj Gen Kabintsev

TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 241,  
inv. 2656, file 51, sheets 362-367, 370-371.

From the Political Report of the Chief of the Political Directorate of the First Baltic Front to the Chief of the Main Political Directorate of the Red Army of 29 June 1944

In the battles to liberate the city of Vitebsk, the soldiers, sergeants and officers of the First Baltic Front showed mass examples of heroism and valor.

During the breaching of the enemy defenses to the northwest of Vitebsk, the soldiers and officers of a company of the 732d Rifle Regiment of the 235th Rifle Division under the command of Sr Lt Khodumukhametov fought courageously and skillfully. After the artillery softening up the men to a man rose and went into the attack. Ahead was the company party organizer, Comrade Yalov. Having broken the enemy's resistance, the men through the brush covertly came out in the rear of two enemy companies. The Nazis endeavored to break out of the half-circle but they did not succeed as the platoons of Jr Lt Mikhaylov and Lt Bogdanov cut off all routes of escape. With the support of the company of Lt Sal'min, the company of Khodumukhametov completely closed the ring around the Nazis, a large portion of which were destroyed with the remnants of 75 soldiers being taken prisoner.

The company of Capt Karabanov (935th Rifle Regiment of the 306th Rifle Division) by skillful maneuver outflanked the enemy which had dug in at the village of Molomeno, and by an attack from the flank broke into its edge. In a street battle the men fought courageously and bravely. Capt Karabanov inspired the men by his personal example. Being severely wounded, he shouted: "Forward for the motherland, more bravely, aces!" By a rapid attack the company drove the Nazis out of the village, having destroyed scores of enemy soldiers. In this battle, the squad commander Sgt Yefimov by firing a light machine gun wiped out a group of submachine gunners, he neutralized a light machine gun and thereby supported the advance of the company. In an express leaflet quickly put out by the editor Shorn, there was the comment: "Sgt Yefimov destroyed an enemy machine gun and supported the advance of the subunit. Be the equal of Sgt Yefimov. He is fighting courageously for the motherland!"

The tank crew consisting of the communists Lt Marchenko, the driver Netmatulin and the radio operator Logvinov in 2 days of combat destroyed up to 35 enemy

soldiers and officers, hit 4 motor vehicles, 2 motorcycles and up to 10 wagons with military supplies.

The sergeant from the 732d Rifle Regiment of the 235th Rifle Division Chinayev, on the offensive, quickly moved ahead of his subunit and alone captured 13 Nazi soldiers.

A sergeant from the same regiment, Sabirov Khasan, by personal example in combat led the subunit. He was the first to break into the Mazeka Sovkhoz and raised the red flag there.

The privates from the 5th Rifle Company of the 1122d Rifle Regiment of the 334th Rifle Division, Lapshin and Popov, in pursuing the enemy, discovered an enemy gun, destroyed the crew, captured the cannon and took one Nazi prisoner.

From the morning of 24 June, the 268th Guards Rifle Regiment was conducting stubborn battles for the population point of Malyshki. The Nazis defended themselves stubbornly and three times went over to a counterattack. At 2000 hours, the regiment tried to take the village by storm but this mission was not carried out. During the night the entire personnel learned that the Supreme Commander-in-Chief had high praise for the actions of the division in breaking through the enemy defenses. This caused an enormous upsurge. At dawn the subunits by a decisive attack drove the Nazis out of Malyshki Village and from the next population point, Lyakhovtsy.

The first to break into the village were the men in the subunit under the command of the VKP(b) member, Guards Sr Lt Mal'tsev. In the second battalion, the agitator from the machine gun company, party member Gorinov, set an example of valor and courage. During the night before the attack, he told the men of the successes of our troops and urged the men to increase combat activity. "Follow my example, mercilessly destroy the Nazi occupiers," said Gorinov. In this battle he destroyed 7 Nazis and when there were no longer any cartridges for the machine gun, Gorinov continued to fire on the Nazis using a submachine gun.

In pursuing the retreating Nazis, units of the 67th Guards Rifle Division moved forward rapidly. Before reaching the Western Dvina River, talks were held among the personnel about the forthcoming mission of crossing the river and about what means must be used in crossing water barriers. Brief meetings were held for the communists, the agitators were assembled and they were given tasks to show their vanguard role in crossing the river. The desire to reach the Western Dvina as quickly as possible and cross it became a mass movement among the personnel.

On 24 June at 1200 hours, the first to approach the river were the men, sergeants and officers from a training battalion and they immediately began to cross. An hour later the entire battalion was on the left bank of the river and continued to dig in on the achieved bridgehead. Among the officers the first to cross to the left bank were the Guards Sr Lts Verbitskiy and Kotlya, as well as Guards Lt Aleksandrov. Having swum across the river, they at the same time commanded the subunits and ensured an organized crossing. In capturing a bridgehead on the left bank, the Guards Red Armymen Gerasimenko and Trifonov, Guards Sr Sgts Mokhov and Kheml'nitskiy and the winner of two Orders

of Glory, Guards Sr Sgt Ivanishko particularly distinguished themselves. They, crossing their machine guns on rafts, by fire paralyzed the enemy and did not allow it to interfere in the actions of our troops.

Next to the training battalion, the Western Dvina was quickly crossed by subunits from the 201st Guards Rifle Regiment under the command of Guards Lt Col Inozemtsev. The first to swim across were the scouts headed by Capt Prokhorov. Distinguishing themselves here were Guards Sr Sgt Akhmedulin, Guards Lt Butenko, the signalman Guards Sgt Rylov. Rylov quickly strung a wire across the river and established contact and this played a major role in directing the crossing subunits. Behind Prokhorov's scouts the men of Guards Sr Lt Turushev quickly swam across the river. His subunits initiated combat on the left bank of the river, it pushed back the opposing Nazis and thereby significantly facilitated the crossing for the other subunits....

In crossing the Western Dvina River, a company of submachine gunners from the 234th Rifle Regiment under the command of Capt A. F. Chinkov distinguished itself. In the evening of 24 June, Chinkov along with the submachine gunner, communist Ovsyannikov and MSgt Kudryavtsev, crossed to the left bank on a raft. Having skillfully organized the fire plan, Capt Chinkov supported the crossing for the entire company. Without waiting, Chinkov with his men entered the forest, combed it, moved forward, captured the village of Vyazhishe and came out on the highroad. After the company of communist Chinkov, the river was crossed by the 1st Assault Battalion of Maj Moloshin....

The company of submachine gunners of Lt, Communist S. N. Aleksandrov was the first to break into the outskirts of the city of Vitebsk. The soldiers headed by the platoon commanders, the communists, Lts Sobodev and Mochalov, after fierce battles, cleared the outskirts of the city to the left of the highway. Mochalov's platoon drove off an enemy counterattack, destroyed several score Nazis and captured six prisoners. Sobodev's platoon destroyed a team trying to set afire a uniform dump and captured three prisoners. Having spotted traffic on the road, the submachine gunners opened up with heavy fire, they destroyed four soldiers and several horses, they created a block on the road and broke up the entire cart train. The squad commander, Sft Andriyevskiy, using an enemy cannon destroyed the fleeing Nazis. In clearing the city of Germans, the company of Comrade Aleksandrov destroyed the security of a concentration camp and liberated the 240 imprisoned inhabitants of Vitebsk. The inhabitants described to the soldiers the tortures and hardship which they had experienced during the German occupation....

Chief of the Political Directorate of the First Baltic Front, Maj Gen Drebednev

TsAMO, folio 32, inv. 11289, file 582, sheets 189-195.

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CSO: 1801/386

## WORLD WAR II CAMPAIGN RECORD OF DNIEPER FLOTILLA TRACED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 7, Jul 84 (signed to press 21 Jun 84) pp 68-74

[Article by Vice Adm (Ret) V. Grigor'yev: "A Boat for the Commander!..."]

[Text] On 8 April 1945, the Chief of Staff of the First Belorussian Front, Col Gen M. S. Malinin and I were walking through the narrow streets of a German town. We were to meet with Mar SU G. K. Zhukov. I had been summoned to him to receive an operations directive.

The command post of the front commander was not far from the Oder on the Kustrin bridgehead, just 65 km from Berlin which was soon to be taken by storm. In the operation an important role had been assigned to the Dnieper sailors.

On the evening before, two brigades of river vessels had arrived at the front line. In just 22 days they had made a rapid trip through the Narew, Vistula, Bromberg Canal, Netze, Warta and Oder. On this difficult route over 700 km long, they had to cross around 75 demolished and operating bridges and crossings. Great help here had been provided by the four combat engineer battalions assigned to the flotilla upon instructions of the front commander. Without them things would have been hard....

The ships had traveled through the just-opened rivers.

"Here things rush! Here things are caught up!" commented one of the sailors observing the ice.

But it happened that on a certain bend or river narrows, all of this chaotically retreating icy "army" suddenly piled up in a heap. Then the combat engineers went "into battle," eliminating the plugs and freeing the way for the ships.

"Full steam ahead!" came the usual navy command supplemented by the recently arisen combat shout "Forward to Berlin!"

Ahead of time, the flotilla had concentrated in the designated area for it on the Oder!

I was walking with Gen Malinin to see Mar Zhukov and we were both silent and with our own thoughts. I did not know what my companion was thinking, although

I could guess what concerns dominated the thoughts of the chief of staff of the front before an operation. And I remember a previous meeting with Georgiy Konstantinovich [Zhukov] at the end of 1943 near Kiev. At that time I, the just-appointed commander of the Dnieper Flotilla, was reporting to the commander of the First Ukrainian Front, Army Gen N. F. Vatutin, on the strength and combat capabilities of the flotilla. The representative of Hq SHC who was present at that time, G. K. Zhukov, having listened to the report, stood up, went up to an enormous map and, figuring something in his mind, said:

"Your flotilla, Comrade Grigor'yev, has great prospects for joint operations with the army. Certainly from the Dnieper through the Pripyat you could reach the Western Bug, the Narew and Vistula to Warsaw, and then shift to the rivers of Germany. Possibly, who knows, you could reach Berlin yourself!" He turned sharply, looking questioningly at me and repeated, emphasizing each word: "To Berlin itself! Huh?"

His prediction was confirmed. And he, as it later turned out, had forgotten neither our meeting or his words.

We went into the command post. Zhukov, whom I remembered as dour and even severe, met us with a joke. His voice was as if I had seen him yesterday.

"Well, admiral, you have made it almost to Berlin? I was not wrong then, at Kiev? Hence, you made it. Good fellow!"

"Some places we floated, comrade marshal," I replied, "and somewhere we pushed the boats over a portage. I might say, we carried them in our hands. And 2 days ahead of the date designated by you they have been assembled at the initial positions for the storm."

"For the storm? Like Izmail?...well and good. Only this nut is harder to crack. But we have the teeth. huh?"

And right then he signed a directive on the combat operations of the flotilla in the Berlin Operation. In handing me the document, he admonished:

"In the near future, Comrade Grigor'yev, personally call on all three commanders with whom the brigades of your ships will cooperate and coordinate all questions with them. Remember that the combat tasks which they are to set for your commanders must be approved by you without fail."

In bidding farewell, the marshal shook my hand firmly:

"Well, sailor, I wish you success." And, bringing his face closer to me, he again smiled briefly. He asked quietly, as if a secret: "Well, is a boat for the commander necessary?"

I answered him with an understanding smile, but I was highly embarrassed. "How," I thought in surprise, "did this reach Zhukov?"

In the next few days I had to meet with the commanders, agree with each of them on the procedure of cooperation and determine the specific methods of joint

combat operations. Such agreement was also essential because the flotillas for the first time in the course of a front operation had to simultaneously cooperate with three armies fighting in an area of several hundred kilometers. And the operation was an unusual one, the storming of Berlin, the finale of the entire war! In order to successfully carry out this difficult task, all the possible variations of actions considering the probable changes in the situation had to be carefully, precisely and clearly coordinated with the commanders.

The first whom I saw was the commander of the 5th Attack Army, Col Gen N. E. Berzarin. His troops were to fight on the very point of the front's main thrust and after breaking open the enemy defenses capture the governmental districts of the Nazi capital.

On 9 April 1945, having tentatively reached agreement with Nikolay Erastovich [Berzarin] over the high frequency telephone, I showed up at his command post. Rising to meet me from behind the desk was a youngish general about 40 years of age, of average height and thick set. The curly hair was completely gray.

"Salud, comorados!" Berzarin greeted me.

I knew that in the 1930's he had fought for around 2 years in Spain but of course I could not assume that I was talking with the future first military commandant of liberated Berlin.

"I am very pleased, comrade admiral! The chief of staff of the front has already phoned me. Please come over here." He quickly went over to an enormous map of Berlin which took up half of the wall: "Here is the combat route by which my army should make its way to the lair. Just look how much blue there is. Solid rivers, canals and lakes. How can the infantry do it?"

Berzarin looked questioningly at me. In the dark blue of his eyes I could see, like starlight in evening water, the flashes of good will.

After a pause, almost unnoticed, as if we had not met for the first time, but rather had fought shoulder to shoulder during these long war years, he switched over to the informal "you" and as if jokingly asked:

"Do you not, admiral, among your boats have something easier? For example, a launch?"

Berzarin was waiting for a reply. And I was silent. "What have they agreed upon?" the notion flashed through my mind. "Yesterday Zhukov and now Berzarin...."

The penetrating glance of the army commander obviously caught the confusion in my face.

"I have in mind light boats for moving across the rivers, lakes and canals," the general added hurriedly. "You understand that without any particular difficulty they could be brought to the crossing and we could move across on them. That is what I mean."

"Does he really know?" I asked myself mentally, catching ambiguity and disagreement in the last phrase. "Well, let him know. It turns out that I have become well known. There is nothing to be downhearted about. Certainly it was no failure but rather an inspired phrase of a marshal...." All of this I was turning over in my mind, but said outloud:

"Basically all my combat vessels each weigh several score tons. This clearly will not do for you. But I still have a hydroplane. There are also small plywood launches...." I for an instant hesitated, expecting to see the incipient smile. But Berzarin was serious and attentive. "They weigh around 2 tons. They are very fast. Each is equipped with a medium machine gun. The crew is 2 seamen. They can carry up to 10-12 submachine gunners."

"This obviously will do. I will consult with an engineer." Berzarin contacted someone by telephone. "The engineer confirms that these will do," he announced with animation.

We determined when and where the army would deliver the "Studebakers" for loading the hydroplanes.

Berzarin again returned to the map of Berlin.

"Just look, Vissarionych, here. Do you see this dot?" His pencil was poised over the Reichstag. "Whoever is the first with his fellows to reach it will have his due..."

On this we parted.

The Commander of the 8th Guards Army, Col Gen V. I. Chuykov also greeted me very warmly. And when he learned that in the storming of Berlin he was to cooperate with ship crews who along with his 62d Army had defended heroic Stalingrad, he was deeply moved.<sup>1</sup>

"When I in 1942," he recalled, "thanked the sailors for the naval 'fire,' I told them over the telephone: 'Good man, Volga!' and now at Berlin I will say: 'Good man, Dnieper!'"

We quickly reached agreement on all the questions of combat cooperation.

Having said farewell to Chuykov, I went to the southernmost flank of the front, to the area of the city of Frankfurt an der Oder, to the commander of the 33d Army, Col Gen V. D. Tsvetayev.

The army commander informed me that he had all the instructions from the front staff on joint combat operations with the sailors. I reported to him that the recently organized 3d Ship Brigade of the flotilla would cooperate with him. In addition, we had additionally assigned it two of our naval infantry companies with up to 500 battle-tested fighters including submachine gunners, machine gunners and mortar troops.

Tsvetayev was no longer a young man, but even with his years and height he was smart and handsome. I could immediately see that he was an old leader. And

there was certainly cordiality. It remained with me long after the farewell handshake and added strength which was so necessary.

On 15 April 1945, I was summoned for a last report to the chief of staff of the front Gen M. S. Malinin. Mikhail Sergeyevich [Malinin] unfolded a map.

"Comrade Grigor'yev, at 0200 hours on 16 April be at this point," he said pointing to a place on the map. "There should be no one in the vehicle except you and the driver."

And at the designated hour I traveled to the place of meeting. The dark moonless night seemingly wished to lull us, bounced the vehicle along invisible ruts. Coming right down to the road, also invisible but making its presence felt by the noise, the forest made the darkness even more impenetrable. We had to feel our way along. And I was thinking that all the ships were at the firing positions in full combat readiness but here was the commander in a grounded launch....

Enough! Again that launch...but why enough? Time permitted and one could give way to memories. Particularly as they were related to a pleasant meeting and also important events.

Yes, just a year had passed since then. Again the flotilla had been preparing to carry out combat operations in cooperation with the ground forces. And it was also a very-promising, cheerful spring. April made one dizzy with sweet secret aromas and one's heart was filled with joy over the soon-to-be liberation of the homeland from the Nazi invaders. And again we had been crossing the spring mud in a car. Only it was during the day.

The battered captured Opal was barely making its way through the April mud, climbing over the sticky and steep bumps, like a launch in an oncoming wave. At another time its slow progress would certainly have caused vexation but then the delay suited me. I even wanted to stop, to get out of the car and walk through the awakening forest. A headwind carried the bitter exciting odors of sap, last year's leaves and aroused memories of long-forgotten peacetime days. But not only the call of spring beckoned into the silent forest, causing thoughts of a brief rest and a halt. I also wanted to concentrate and collect my thoughts before the meeting which could not help but be stirring. I was to talk with the commander of the First Belorussian Front, Army Gen K. K. Rokossovskiy, about whom I had heard so much and to whom the flotilla was subordinate.

Of course, I did not get out of the car or walk through the forest as the mud had already held us up. But my excitement was eased somewhat later, and the commander himself helped in this. He received me very politely and simply. I immediately calmed down.

The command of the front, Konstantin Konstantinovich [Rokossovskiy] informed me, had paid attention to the small forces of the flotilla. This was right. Although we had now more than 100 ships, just one-sixth of them was gunboats with cannons (16 armored launches and 1 long-range naval floating battery):

"How many cannons are there?" asked the front's chief of staff Malinin.

The figures mentioned by me sounded unpersuasive.

"Yes, you have few fighting ships," concluded Rokossovskiy.

"We will try to help."

Then happened what was to then become the grounds for a good joke.

The commander of the front walked with me to my vehicle.

"In what sort of heap are you traveling?" he said sincerely grieved. "No, this won't do."

Turning aside, the general ordered one of his aides:

"Bring up a new jeep!" and then, either absent-mindedly or intentionally added: "A boat for the commander of the Dnieper Flotilla."

Then, in April 1944, at the People's Commissariat of the Navy there was a strong impression that the commander of the front, without yet knowing how the flotilla would behave in battle, showed an interest in strengthening it. As I was to learn, on the next day, Rokossovskiy telegraphed the people's commissar of the navy on the need to build up the flotilla's ship strength.

In the flotilla itself for a long time they discussed my meeting with the commander. And they gossiped how an army general had escorted a captain 1st rank to his car and even presented him with a new vehicle. Rokossovskiy's phrase was passed around and became popular: "A boat for the commander!" Moreover, for the Dnieper sailors it became a symbol of decisive combat operations. If I was summoned to the staff of the front, there inevitably was some smart aleck who issued an order using this phrase. "A boat for the commander!" was heard now and then and everyone knew that a new offensive was in the offing.

Subsequently I met many times with K. K. Rokossovskiy who soon thereafter became marshal of the Soviet Union. I came to know his great exactingness which was combined with unusual tact, delicacy and exceptional attentiveness to others. To fight under his command meant to undergo great schooling in commander skills.

The catchwords of Konstantin Konstantinovich were heard again in June 1944 when I received an urgent instruction from the front's staff. The flotilla had been given the mission of increasing the ship strength on the Berezina by no later than 16 June. But it was prohibited to move all the ships from the Pripyat. Having left a minimum of necessary forces there, the flotilla moved by the time set by the front's staff. The ships of the 1st Brigade of Capt 2d Rank S. M. Lyal'ko consisting of 13 armored launches, 10 minesweepers, 12 patrol boats and 12 hydroplanes after a 700-km trip arrived on the Berezina. The flotilla's command post was also moved here from the Pripyat. I established my auxiliary command post in the battle formations of the 1st Brigade, 3 km from the front line.

The night of 24 June 1944, the night before the start of the strategic Bagration Operation. No one slept, recalling, some silently and some quietly with a neighbor, the past. And there was much to recall. The Dnieper Flotilla had glorious combat traditions and a rich heroic biography. Organized for the first time in the distant year of 1919, upon personal instructions of V. I. Lenin, it had valorously fought the bands of Denikin and Vrangeli and the White Poles. During the first days of the Great Patriotic War, under the command of Rear Adm D. D. Rogachev, the Dnieper sailors had showed examples of courage and steadfastness in the defense of Kiev. When the last battles for the capital of the Ukraine were underway, they, having used up all their ammunition, raised on their ships the heroic signal "I perish but I do not surrender!" Then, having blown up their boats, they came ashore to continue fighting the enemy on land. Here they vowed to return to the Dnieper, to liberate Kiev and then the entire homeland. Here is what the well-known naval writer L. S. Sobolev wrote about them: "...The Dnieper Flotilla is remarkable in the fact that by its nature and by its traditions it operates by surprise, with daring and boldness. It is also remarkable in the fact that it is constantly ahead of the army, for its mission consists in establishing a front in the enemy rear: to transport the army units there and then again move forward, clearing the Nazis from our land." <sup>2</sup>

And here we were on the Berezina. It took us a long time to get here, and we had to go through many battles. On the chests of many Dnieper sailors were decorations for Odessa, Sevastopol and Stalingrad. On the armor of the fast ships, like battle wounds, were marks from Nazi shells and shrapnel under the hail of which they had crossed the Volga several times a day. From Stalingrad all these ships had moved only to the west, knowing no other course.

The Bagration Operation started with a powerful artillery offensive in which the Dnieper combat ships took an active part. They destroyed all the targets designated for them by the Army Command. In that battle first-rate firing was demonstrated by the flotilla gunnery correction officers Sr Lts S. P. Khvatov and V. M. Zaginaylo.

Our troops broke through the strengthened enemy lines and quickly pushed deep into enemy defenses. In order to save their units from encirclement on the left bank of the Berezina, the Nazis hurriedly began to shift reinforcements there. They were crossing in the area of the strongly fortified defensive center in Parichi. The commander of the 65th Army, Col Gen P. I. Batov, ordered the units of the Dnieper Flotilla cooperating with it to destroy this crossing.

The commander of the 1st Brigade of River Vessels, Capt 2d Rank S. M. Lyal'ko, together with units from the 193d Division organized the defeat and capture of the center of resistance in Zdudichi on the forward edge of the German defenses. After this, the armored boats of Capt 3d Rank A. I. Peskov began to move rapidly up the Berezina to Parichi, destroying along the way the artillery positions on the river banks. Under heavy return fire the armored boats were able to get within 600-800 m of the crossing and almost at point-blank range began firing on the enemy tanks and assault guns as well as at the motor vehicles with infantry crossing the bridge. Panic broke out and the burning vehicles created a block.

After a stubborn battle, the crossing at Parichi was blown up and destroyed, and the Nazis, abandoning their combat equipment, in a panic began to pull back toward Bobruysk. A portion of the armored boats broke through along the river into the center of the city, destroying by fire the accumulations of personnel and combat equipment. During this heavy and stubborn battle, particularly distinguishing themselves were the detachment of ships of Sr Lt I. M. Plekhov and the armored boats of Sr Lt M. D. Zhilenko and Lts A. A. Nikolayev and A. M. Yevgen'yev. They destroyed 20 artillery pieces, 2 tanks and much enemy personnel.

The command of the 65th Army, in praising the actions of the Dnieper sailors in the battles of 24-26 June, pointed out that their ships had helped to wipe out the Zdudichi-Parichi Nazi grouping covering Bobruysk from the south and supported the rapid advance of our troops along the banks of the Berezina.<sup>3</sup>

In the morning of 27 June, an order was received from Mar K. K. Rokossovskiy according to which we were to allocate a maximum number of boats immediately, without halting combat operations in the center of Bobruysk, for quickly transporting the 48th Army of Col Gen P. L. Romanenko across the Berezina. At the same time the chief of staff of the front over the high frequency telephone transmitted that the order from the commander required emergency execution. This was explained by the fact that the regular crossing equipment of the army had been held up along the way. The heavy rains had so eroded the clay dirt roads that they had become completely impassable for the heavy pontoon bridge equipment.

A detachment of armored boats (four units) were left at the center of Bobruysk for continuing the fight. The remaining ships of the flotilla began to carry out the new mission.

The ferrying of the troops started immediately as soon as they reached the bank of the Berezina. The carrying out of such a difficult task required great effort, inventiveness and initiative from the sailors. All the ship crews worked unstintingly, making up to 30 round-trips a day with a river from 300 to 400 m wide. On boats lashed together, they even carried transports with freight, motor vehicles and artillery pieces with a caliber up to 122 mm. The personnel of the minesweepers adapted to transporting 10-12 horses in one trip.

Everything was basically completed on 29 June. In less than 2 days, we had ferried across: 66,000 soldiers, 700 guns, 850 mortars, 500 motor vehicles with ammunition and other freight, 7,000 carts and more than 7,000 horses.<sup>4</sup> Over the high frequency telephone Mar K. K. Rokossovskiy commended all the personnel of the flotilla for the precise and quick ferrying of the 48th Army across the Berezina. It was now a year later. The memorable phrase of Konstantin Konstantinovich had not been forgotten, accompanying us to Berlin itself.

My recollections were interrupted by a sudden stop. Another vehicle was approaching the designated place at the same time. We exchanged passwords and continued on together. Soon we were met by the commander of the armored and mechanized troops of the front, Lt Gen G. N. Orel with a group of generals. One after another we climbed a wooden tower up a steep ladder 10-12 m high.

The front line was some 2 or 3 km away from us and in the same direction you could scarcely make out the outlines of the Oder. It was quiet. It was now 0255 hours. In 5 minutes the storming would begin! Tension was at a maximum. There were the last telephone reports to the front's chief of staff.

Yes, the Dnieper sailors had kept their vow made in 1941. We had returned not only to the Dnieper. Now ahead of us was the Oder and beyond that Berlin!

0300 hours. The roar of tens of thousands of cannons and rocket launchers broke the silence over the Oder. But even in this babble of noise I could clearly distinguish the characteristic thump of the rounds of the heavy long-range naval cannons, dull and heavy. But it turned out that not only I had caught this.

"Who is firing so close to us?" asked Malinin.

"The sailors are at work," they reported.

"Who are they working for?"

"For Berzarin and Chuykov."

"And for victory," concluded the chief of staff.

...The ships of the 1st and 2d Brigades of the Flotilla from their firing positions on the Kustrin bridgehead were taking an active part in the front's artillery offensive. Having gotten off some 27,000 rounds against the enemy just on 16 April, they destroyed all the targets assigned them.

On 23 April, the units of the IX Guards Rifle Corps of the 5th Assault Army under the command of Hero of the Soviet Union, Lt Gen I. P. Roslyy, with active assistance from the Red Banner Dnieper Naval Flotilla, began crossing the Spree in the center of Berlin in the aim of capturing the area of governmental buildings. In less than 2 days of intense fighting under heavy artillery and mortar firing by the Nazis, the ships of the flotilla 1st Brigade transported across it some 16,000 soldiers, 600 artillery pieces, 1,000 horses, all the rear services and also towed across pontoons with 26 tanks.

In the course of the intense battles Nikolay Erastovich Berzarin found several minutes to twice call me over the high frequency telephone. The first call:

"Well, your fellows are heroes, admiral! With my own eyes I watched their combat work and was overwhelmed."

The second, was after Roslyy's corps had finished crossing the Spree:

"Admiral, there are no words to express it! All your sailors have been submitted for Heroes! Thanks for such aces! Salud, Vissarionych!"

Several days after the end of the combat operations and the celebrating of Victory Day, a conference was held for the leadership of the First Belorussian Front. It discussed and analyzed the just completed Berlin Strategic Operation.

The conference was led by Mar SU G. K. Zhukov. The turn came round to speak to the commander of the IX Brandenburg Guards Rifle Corps, Hero of the Soviet Union, Lt Gen I. P. Roslyy. Taking the floor, he turned to Mar Zhukov:

"Comrade Marshal Soviet Union, permit me first of all to bow low to our glorious Dnieper sailors for outstanding combat cooperation and inestimable aid...."

After the conference, by the entrance to the building where it had been held, I heard behind me the well-known words said by someone as a joke:

"A boat for the admiral!"

"Why?" I thought in perplexity. "The war is over. What offensive is there now?" Possibly, only at that time did I really and completely realize that the war was over, victory had come and the Soviet sailors on their ships had appeared on the River Spree on the very center of Berlin.

Much time has passed since then. It is now the 39th anniversary of our Great Victory and the jubilee 40th of Operation Bagration.

In meeting with combat friends, each time I recall with them the river, lake and even the land roads of the Dnieper Flotilla. At present, in thinking over what we experienced, I perceive its remarkable features more clearly and awar-ly. Just what are these? The Dnieper sailors always fought in the sector of the main thrust of the ground troops with which they were cooperating in battle. They showed mass heroism. Our flotilla was the only one of all the others to receive the high naval decoration of the Order of Ushakov 1st Degree and become the first Red Banner flotilla. Some 20 Heroes of the Soviet Union are entered on its honor rolls.

From Stalingrad to Berlin the Dnieper sailors had to "open" many "locks" before they finally made their way to the main one, Berlin. These "locks" for them were Zdudichi, Parichi, Bobruysk, Belcho, Petrikov, Doroshevichi, Luninets, Pinsk, Serotsk, Ziegze and Komarnitsa. Many roads were covered and many years lived through. But the hearts of the veterans always beat in time with the hearts of the heirs of their combat glory and are always in combat readiness.

#### FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> During the Great Patriotic War, the Dnieper Naval Flotilla was reorganized basically from ships of the Volga Naval Flotilla in September 1943.
- <sup>2</sup> Leonid Sobolev, "Svet Pobedy" [The Light of Victory], Moscow, Sovetskaya Rossiya, 1968, p 241.
- <sup>3</sup> TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 521, inv. 288867, file 2, sheets 177-178.
- <sup>4</sup> TsVMA [Central Naval Archives], folio 211, inv. 11274, sheet 65.

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CSO: 1801/386

#### SOVIET VIEWS ON ISRAELI OPERATION IN LEBANON PRESENTED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 7, Jul 84 (signed to press 21 Jun 84) pp 75-80

[Article by Candidate of Military Sciences Col R. Loskutov and Col V. Morozov: "Certain Tactical Questions of the Armed Conflict in Lebanon in 1982"]

[Text] The tragic events in the summer of 1982 in Lebanon clearly demonstrated to the entire world the truly bestial nature and misanthropic essence of Israel's military-political leadership. In initiating an armed aggression, it did not stop short of violating the generally accepted standards of international law. In using fascist methods, the aggressor carried out a policy of genocide, endeavoring by armed force to crush the Palestine Resistance Movement (PRM), the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the combat detachments of the Lebanese National-Patriotic Forces (NPF) and weaken Syria. In the course of the aggression, mass murders of the civilian population, children, women and the elderly were carried out. The tragedy of Lidice and Katyn from the times of World War II was repeated in the Lebanese population points of Tyre (Sur) and Sayda. The peaceful population was poisoned with chemicals, burned up by napalm and maimed with cluster, antipersonnel and phosphorus bombs as well as ammunition armed with needle elements.

The Israelis committed particularly terrible crimes in West Beirut in the Palestine refugee camps. Some 1,800 Palestinians and Lebanese were the victims of Israeli genocide in the Sabra and Shatila camps and around 1,500 sick and wounded were caught by the butchers in the Beirut hospitals of Gaza and Akki.<sup>1</sup>

The barbarian aggression against Lebanon was the direct consequence of the expansionistic aspirations of Tel-Aviv which in every possible way is endeavoring to justify the "historic rights" of the Jews to form a "Great Israel" from the Nile to the Euphrates and thereby justify the seizing of the territories in adjacent Arab states. Here its aggressive intrigues conform fully to the U.S. foreign policy strategy of ensuring the "vitally important" interests in the Near East. On this issue the report of the Central Committee of the Israeli Communist Party at its 17th Congress pointed out: "The truth is that the nationalistic disdain is based not so much on the strength of Israel which ultimately is dependent and limited as on the strength of U.S. imperialist support."<sup>2</sup>

Unable to seek satisfaction of its claims by military and political pressure on Lebanon, Syria and Jordan (similar to the Camp David Agreement), the Israeli leadership decided in June 1982 to carry out an armed invasion. The Israeli combat plan was based on a lightning-like attack (a "Blitzkrieg"). For achieving the aims set on the border with Lebanon, by the spring of 1982, a strong grouping of the aggressor's armed forces had been concentrated. As is apparent from the Western press, on the 10th day of combat operations it consisted of over 100,000 men equipped with all types of modern weapons.<sup>3</sup>

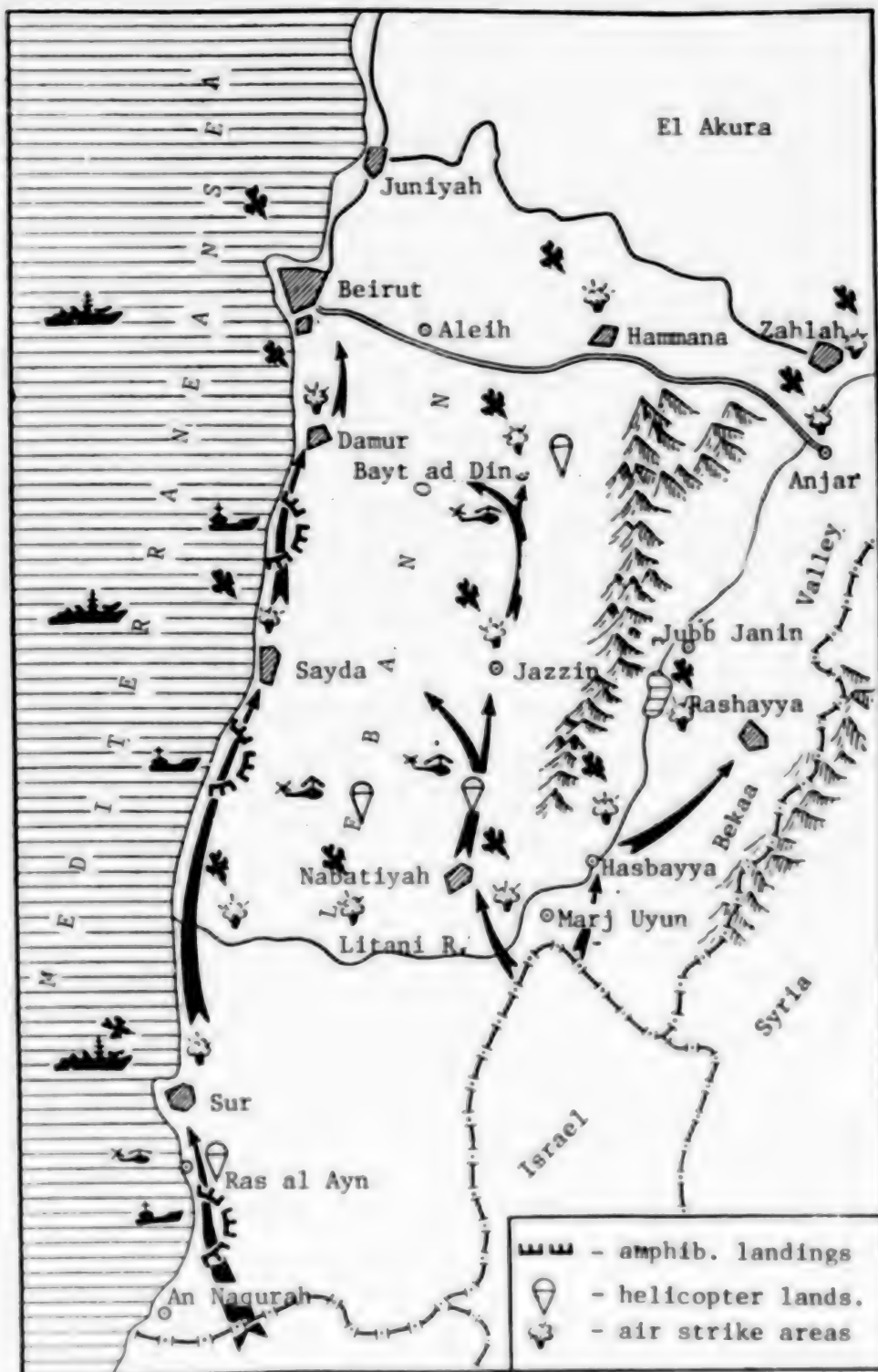
Careful reconnaissance preceded the direct attack on Lebanon. In actual terms the Israeli Command had succeeded in obtaining reliable data on the grouping of ground forces, the degree of their combat readiness, positions of the air defenses, airfield network, the effective strength of the aviation, the command posts and the supply system for the defending forces.

During the period of preparing for the aggression, particular attention had been paid to the ideological exposure of the Israeli Army personnel. In the troops intense propaganda was carried out aimed at fanning nationalism, chauvinism, anti-Arab and anti-Palestinian attitudes. Here all mass information media were used. The war was presented as an easy walk-over which would make it possible to put an end once and for all to the Palestinians.

At the same time measures were carried out to conceal the pending attack. At the permanent troop positions, without changing the conditions for the daily operation of communications, false networks were established. The subunits, units and formations moved up into the assembly areas were carefully camouflaged. Some of them were sent into the operational destination areas under the guise of exercises. The preparations of the aviation and navy for combat operations were organized with particular care and secrecy. Disinformation was widely employed using radios and a concentration of troops on the Golan Heights was simulated. All these measures were aimed at concealing the time for the aggression and the axis of the attacks.

The operation under the code name "Peace for Galilee" started on 6 June 1982. The land invasion was preceded by a 3-day massed bombing of the Leganese population points and Palestinian refugee camps, by artillery shelling involving Israeli naval ships which approached the coast in the areas of Sayda and Tyre. The offensive by the attack grouping was carried out along three basic axes: coastal of Tyor (Sur), Sayda, Damur, Beirut; the central axis of Nabatiyah, Jazzin coming out on the Beirut--Damascus Highway; the eastern axis of Hasbayya, Rashayya, the Bekaa Valley with a possible emerging on the Lebanese-Syrian frontier (see the diagram).

In the course of the aggression, the Israeli Command took into account the conditions of the mountainous terrain, the focal nature of the defenses and the small amount of heavy weapons and the poor cooperation among the defending forces. All this made it possible for the Israeli troops to conduct the offensive along individual axes, chiefly along roads, by brigades and in individual instances by battalions in approach-march formations. The infantry, as a rule, operated on armored personnel carriers without dismounting.



Axes of Israeli Troop Attacks  
in the Course of the Lebanese Invasion

The tanks were usually employed as companies and battalions. For reducing the losses of armored equipment, the Israelis used design improvements which increased its survivability. Thus, for protecting the M-48 and M-60 tanks from shaped-charge ammunition additional special coverings were mounted on the exterior surface of the frontal armor as a result of which its penetrability was reduced. In combat operations, new Israeli-produced Merkava tanks were employed having multilayer armor and an engine located in the front.

The basic weapon used against enemy personnel, combat equipment, strongpoints and for destroying defensive works was aviation, field artillery and mortars. In the course of carrying out fire tasks, massed strikes were widely used. Here a reduced time for calling in and increased effectiveness of the air and artillery strikes were achieved by assigning air force and artillery officers to the staffs of the first echelon units and sometimes to subunits fighting on individual axes. For coordinating the actions of the ground forces and the naval forces on the coastal sector, naval officers were assigned to the staffs of the formations and units.

Characteristic of the combat operations of the Israeli troops during this conflict was the use of night attacks, the bypassing of strongpoints and attacking the flank and rear of the defending troops. Here the first echelon forces, as a rule, did not engage in extended battles but endeavored to develop the offensive in depth. The mission of neutralizing the fortified camps and strongpoints was entrusted to the second echelons.

Considering the particular features of the theater and nature of combat operations of the Palestinians, the Israeli Command widely used the transporting of airborne, infantry and other subunits by helicopter into the rear of the defender. As a rule, the landing of airborne parties was preceded by air and artillery strikes against the personnel and weapons in the area of the pending landing and when necessary also against the directly adjacent areas.

The naval forces provided active support for the ground troops fighting on the coastal sectors, they patrolled the coastal zone of Lebanon and set up a blockade of Beirut from the sea. Amphibious forces were landed in several areas on the coast. In addition, the navy conducted reconnaissance, it monitored shipping and provided sea shipments of troops and materiel.

Both the amphibious and airborne parties were used to capture important heights and road junctions. They disrupted communications on the routes of retreat for the battle formations of the Palestinians and the Lebanese NPF and conducted sabotage in their rear and terroristic acts against the peaceful population.

In the course of the combat operations, Israeli aviation carried out missions for direct air support of the ground troops, for winning and maintaining air supremacy, for destroying air defenses and control posts, for interdicting the bringing up of reserves and supporting the operations of the airborne and amphibious landings. It fought against tanks and provided electronic and visual air reconnaissance. In the process of carrying out these missions, the air force was used on an integrated basis and control of it was centralized. Air combat operations were characterized by attacks both during daylight and nighttime, by the carrying out of careful reconnaissance and final reconnaissance of

objectives designated to be hit, by the active employment of radar and communications jamming and by the extensive use of feint flights by large groups at medium altitudes with the concealed locating of the attack groups at low altitudes outside the range of enemy radar. For attacking ground installations, aviation operated in small groups of 4-6 aircraft. These were guided by the F-2C Hawkeye early warning and control aircraft as well as Boeing-707 specially equipped with electronic devices. Extensive use was made of the new American-produced F-15 and F-16 fighters armed with the Sparrow and Sidewinder guided missiles.

According to announcements in the foreign press, in combat operations use was made of cluster bombs and fuel-air bombs where the shockwave in their exploding causes brain concussion, rupturing of the liver and spleen with internal bleeding, the popping out of eyeballs, the rupturing of eardrums and the loss of elasticity in individual areas of lung tissue leading to a disruption of respiratory function and so forth. The entire world witnessed how the Zionist aggressors with direct support from Washington used this barbarian weapon with the mark "Made in the USA" in Beirut.<sup>5</sup>

While in the previous Arab-Israeli conflicts, for combating tanks basically antitank guided missiles, antitank artillery, recoilless weapons and antitank helicopters were employed, in the present conflict the combating of armored objects underwent further development by the integrated use of unmanned reconnaissance aircraft as a means for the reconnaissance and final reconnaissance of armored objects with basically aviation being used as the weapon of attack.

It should be pointed out that from the first days of the war, the tank and mechanized brigades of the aggressor encountered stubborn resistance from the unified detachments of the PRM and the Lebanese NPF.

On the territory captured by the occupiers, partisan groups immediately began operating and these destroyed the combat equipment and personnel of the invaders. The partisans conducted several successful operations in the area of Nabatiyah and Zahrani where they succeeded in surrounding an enemy group. The aggressor was also dealt the worthy repulse by the Syrian units from the inter-Arab peacekeeping forces in Lebanon.

After the invasion, the Israelis were approaching Beirut. At the same time, combat operations developed in the mountains of Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley adjacent to Syria. Being unable to take West Beirut without a halt, the Israeli Command went over to besieging it and this continued for more than 2 months. The city was constantly subjected to bombing from the air and to missile and artillery shelling from the land and sea. Everything was destroyed without discrimination: residential districts, schools and hospitals. In actuality the city was turned into a test range for new types of American and Israeli weapons.

In order to save the capital of Lebanon from complete destruction and its population from death, the PLO fighters left the city after 78 days of courageously opposing the numerically superior enemy which was equipped with modern American military technology. They left with their head held high and weapons in hand.

Of all the Arab-Israeli wars, this war was the longest and bloodiest with tens of thousands of killed and wounded Arabs, including more than 60,000 peaceful inhabitants; around a million persons were left homeless; tens of thousands of Lebanese and Palestinians were put into concentration camps; six cities were completely destroyed; 14 Palestinian camps were wiped from the face of the earth; more than 30 villages were put to fire.<sup>6</sup> The Israeli Army also suffered tangible losses. Thousands of soldiers and officers were killed and wounded. In all the Arab-Israeli wars this was the first time that the Israelis suffered such a major loss in personnel.

In analyzing the situation, the Syrian newspaper AL-BATH wrote during these days that the decision of the ruling Israeli upper clique to cease fire would not have been taken if there had not been the courage and tenacity of the Lebanese population of Tyre, Sayda, Nabatiyah and the other cities of Southern Lebanon. The invaders did not succeed in carrying out the set missions. The 120,000-strong invasion army, armed to the teeth with modern American weapons, was unable to eliminate the PRM, to take Beirut and drive the Syrian troops out of Lebanon. And this was precisely the dream of the Tel-Aviv "hawks."<sup>7</sup>

The turn in the Near East policy of Washington from attempts to play a role of "conciliator" and "impartial judge" between Israel and the Arabs to an open siding with the aggressor and direct participation with it in the war against the Arabs has become a natural and normal stage. Although the American Marines together with the English, Italians and French were forced to leave Lebanon, the ships of the U.S. 6th Fleet as before remain off the shores of this country ready to resume the aggression.

The departure of the so-called multinational NATO forces has given Lebanon an opportunity to first abrogate the unequal Lebanese-Israeli agreement imposed by the United States and then resume talks on national reconciliation.

However, the situation in Lebanon remains difficult. Relying on American support, the aggressor does not intend to leave the territories captured in the south of Lebanon. And the United States has not accepted its defeat and continues to intervene into the affairs of this sovereign country. Moreover, Washington and Tel-Aviv more and more openly are viewing Lebanon as a starting point for provocative adventures against Syria and the other Arab states.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> VRAVRA, 22 September 1982.

<sup>2</sup> NOVYE VRESTVA, No 30, 1982, p 6.

<sup>3</sup> KARUPCHNOYE VOYENNOYE OBOZRENIYE, No 8, 1982, p 8.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p 9.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., No 9, 1983, pp 51, 52.

<sup>6</sup> NOVOYE VREMYA, No 41, 1982, p 9.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., No 25, p 13.

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CSO: 1801/386

## PARTISAN, 65TH ARMY COOPERATION IN BELORUSSIAN OPERATION REVIEWED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 7, Jul 84 (signed to press 21 Jun 84) pp 85-89

[Article by Candidate of Historical Sciences, Docent, Col (Ret) B. Chertok: "Cooperation of the Partisans With the Troops of the 65th Army in the Liberation of Belorussia"]

[Text] The staff of the 65th Army (commander, Lt Gen, 29 November 1944, Col Gen P. I. Batov, chief of staff, Maj Gen I. S. Glebov, from 23 November 1943, Maj Gen M. V. Bobkov) began establishing firm ties with the Belorussian partisans even during the battles for the Dnieper bridgehead. For the first time, pilots from the army air division, Sr Lts V. N. Bestuzhev and G. V. Gladyshev, flew out to the partisan area for establishing direct contact with the partisans on 2 November 1943. During this month, the aviators made 10 flights to them in the aims of mutually exchanging intelligence data on the enemy on the front and in the rear.

By the beginning of December, the army formations had entered the Polesye, an area of vast forests and swamps in the southeast of Belorussia. Here there was no solid front line. Between the towns of Parichi and Ozerichi, in the enemy defenses which ran across swampy terrain, there were a number of areas which were unoccupied by troops. Through these the partisans in the southern areas of Belorussia established close contact with the 65th Army troops. Thus, the commander of the partisan formation of Polesye Oblast, I. D. Vetrov, with a group of partisans on 2 December arrived at the village of Gorokhovichi in Oktyabrskiy Rayon of Polesye Oblast, where the staff of the 354th Rifle Division (commander, Maj Gen D. F. Alekseyev) was located, and several days later to the village of Mekhovshchina, where the staff of the 60th Rifle Division (commander, Col A. V. Bogoyavlenskiy) was located. During these meetings the persons present discussed questions of partisan cooperation with the troops.

In December, there was a meeting of the representatives from the partisan formations and the army staff. It was held in the village of Nikolayevka in Parichi Rayon at the staff of the 37th Guards Rifle Division. It was attended by the deputy commander of the 65th Army, Maj Gen I. F. Barinov, the commander of the XIX Rifle Corps, Maj Gen D. I. Samarskiy, the divisional commander, Maj Gen Ye. G. Ushakov, the chief of the political section, Lt Col A. M. Smirnov and a large group of partisan commanders and political workers,

including the secretary of the Bobruysk Underground Party Raykom D. I. Lemeshonok, the chief of staff of the partisan formation of Minsk Oblast G. V. Gnusov, the commander of the 1st Bobruysk Partisan Brigade V. I. Liventsev, the commander of the 87th Partisan Brigade A. V. L'vov and others. The participants in the meeting discussed the questions of organizing cooperation and the conduct of reconnaissance by the partisans in the interests of the army.

In the aim of working out a cooperation plan for the formations of the 65th Army and the partisans, the army military council on 9 December in the village of Ostashkovichi heard a report by the chief of staff of the Minsk Partisan Formation G. V. Gnusov on the situation in the enemy rear ahead of the army front and on its flanks. The meeting reached agreement on adding to the army formations with soldiers from the partisan detachments and inductees from the local population and measures were outlined which the partisans were to carry out in order to cut enemy movements along the Minsk--Bobruysk and Osipovich--Slutsk railroads.

On the same day, the army military council sent to the partisan formation of Minsk Oblast its representatives, Majors A. I. Yagupov and B. M. Chertok (from the staff and political section of the 37th Guards Rifle Division) for receiving the recruits.<sup>1</sup> Over a period of several days the army troops received more than 10,000 inductees arriving from enemy occupied territory.

The Polesye partisan formation, together with the recruits, sent the 60th and 354th Rifle Divisions some 100 tons of flour, 200 head of livestock, potatoes and other products. This help was timely, since the rear services had fallen significantly behind the advancing forward units and the troops were in great need of food.<sup>2</sup>

The army also provided significant aid to the partisans, having sent them from its stores 500 rifles, 200 automatics, 100 antitank rifles, 1.5 million cartridges, 5 units of fire for each existing mortar, 20 tons of explosives, fuzes and other supplies.<sup>3</sup>

At the end of December, the enemy attacked in the area of Parichi on the boundary between the 65th and 48th Armies, somewhat squeezing our troops and at the beginning of January 1944 closed the "partisan gates." Contact with the staff of the 65th Army began to be carried out by the Minsk and Polesye partisan formations only by radio and by air. Certain partisan brigades established radio contact with the staffs of the corps and divisions directly. This provided them with an opportunity to have a regular exchange of information and notify of changes in the situation as well as recent intelligence data.<sup>4</sup>

In June 1944, the Central Committee of the Belorussian KP(b) [Communist Party (Bolshevik)] set the task for the republic partisans of making powerful strikes against the enemy lines of communications. The first attack was to be made simultaneously during the night of 20 June and subsequently carry out continuous sabotage on the railroads and highways, achieving the complete stopping of enemy movement.<sup>5</sup> The staffs of the partisan formations designated for each brigade and the brigades for each detachment areas of roads where they should blow up the track and road surface. The detachment commanders carefully reconnoitered their areas and set a plan for the detachments to break through to the

railroads and highways as well as the procedure for carrying out the demolition work.

During the night of 20 June, the partisans of the Minsk and Polesye formations successfully carried out mass destruction on the railroads and highways in the area of the 60th Army. For example, the 25th Brigade of the Minsk Formation (commander A. I. Dalidovich, commissar A. A. Borovik) carried out 967 explosions, the 37th Brigade (commander, A. V. L'vov, commissar N. B. Khrapko) some 987 explosions, the 101st Brigade (commander, N. D. Kuril'chik, commissar V. T. Merkul') 524 explosions, the 64th Brigade (commander N. N. Rozov, commissar I. S. Kononovich) 390 explosions on the Slutsk--Osipovich railroad, the 121st Brigade (commander, K. F. Pushchin, commissar V. M. Yakimenko) blew up a number of areas of the road surface of the Bobruysk--Glusk--Lyuban highway. The other partisan brigades and detachments also fought successfully.

With the start of the Bagration Operation, the military council of the 65th Army radioed to the partisans of the Minsk and Polesye formations specific tasks for the immediate future, namely: to capture the crossings over the Ptich and Sluch Rivers, to prevent the shifting of reserves and to contribute to the successful offensive of the army troops. In carrying them out, the partisan detachments of the formations continued the sabotage on the railroads and highways, they organized ambushes, they prevented the planned retreat of the enemy troops, they seized crossings on rivers, they defeated individual retreating sub-units and attacked the staffs. For example, the partisan detachments of the Polesye and Minsk formations, under the command of the deputy chief of staff of the Minsk Formation for Intelligence N. P. Kuksov, destroyed several enemy rear and security subunits and on 27 June, having seized the crossings on the Ptich River to the south of Glusk in the areas of Rylovichi, Podluzhye, Berezovka, Kholopenichi, held them until the arrival of the forward subunits of the 15th Rifle Division (commander, Maj Gen K. Ye. Grebennik).<sup>6</sup> Another four brigades of the Minsk Formation (100th, 121st, 161st and 258th) captured a crossing and bridge over the Ptich River in the area of Berezovka and Gluskiy Rayon, and in the areas of Korsha Farm, assembled and concentrated 40 boats which were used for the crossing of the forward detachments from the 48th Guards Rifle Division (commander, Maj Gen G. N. Korchikov).

The detachments from the 37th and 64th Partisan Brigades of the Minsk Formation on 27 June captured the crossings on the Sluch River in the Starobin--Pogost area and for 2 days conducted stubborn battles to hold them, ensuring the rapid crossing of the river by the units of the 193d (commander, Maj Gen A. G. Frolenkov) and 44th Guards (commander, Maj Gen V. A. Borisov) Rifle Divisions. The commanders of the partisan brigades sent out guides to meet the forward sub-units of the armies and they led the units to the crossing seized by the partisans.

Detachments of the 100th (commander A. I. Shuba, commissar I. M. Rozhkov) and 161st (commander A. I. Kudashev, commissar M. S. Poloneychik) Partisan Brigades cooperated successfully with units from the I Guards Tank Corps (commander, Maj Gen Tank Trps M. F. Panov), the 37th Guards and 69th (commander, Maj Gen I. I. Sankovskiy) Rifle Divisions. Together with the units from these divisions, the partisans took an active part in liberating the towns of Kresk, Staryye Dorogi and Osipovichy.<sup>7</sup>

With the defeat of the enemy groupings surrounded at Bobruysk and the liberation of the towns of Osipovichy and Slutsk, divisions of the 65th Army began an offensive on the general axis of Baranovichy. The brigades of the Minsk Partisan Formation were shifted also to this sector. Thus, the 300th Brigade (commander V. G. Yeremenko, commissar N. S. Stepanov) and the 27th Brigade (commander N. A. Shestopalov, commissar N. D. Yemel'yanov) initiated combat with the enemy and liberated the central areas of Uzda and Kopyl, holding them until the approach of units from the 37th and 44th Guards and 193d Rifle Divisions and then drove the Nazis out of the town of Nesvizh.<sup>8</sup>

Close cooperation with the partisans of Baranovichy Oblast were established at this time by all formations of the 65th Army. According to an assignment of the army staff, the partisan detachments of the Baranovichy Formation (commander V. Ye. Chernyshev) increased their activities. Thus, at the beginning of July the detachments of the formation defeated the enemy 217th Rifle Regiment on the march. A larger portion of the regiment's personnel was taken prisoner. Having besieged the highway of Dzerzhinsk--Stolbtsy--Mir--Korelichy, the partisans blocked the escape route of the Nazi troops to Novogrudok. The enemy grouping checked by them was defeated by the arriving units of the 15th and 37th Guards Rifle Divisions.<sup>9</sup> On 1 July, the partisans of the formation seized a bridge across the Shara River on the Slutsk--Brest Highway and held it to the approach of the forward detachment (commander, Lt Col P. I. Cherepok) from the 193d Rifle Division.<sup>10</sup>

In the course of the offensive by the 65th Army formations, the partisans of the oblast rebuilt bridges, they cleared the roads of rubble and the mines set by the Nazis. Due to such help the units of the 37th and 75th Guards, the 15th, 69th and 193d Rifle Divisions quickly arrived at Baranovichy and on 8 July liberated this oblast center.

Having liberated Baranovichy, the troops of the 65th Army continued to successfully advance to the southwest toward the frontiers of Brest and Belostok Oblasts. The army staff by radio maintained close contact with the Brest Partisan formation and also established contact with the command of the Belostok Formation. The commanders of these formations were given specific missions to organize cooperation in the interests of the carrying out of the combat mission by the army's formations.

In the zone of advance of the army in the area of Ruzhanskaya Pushcha was the 99th Partisan Brigade (commander, V. K. Yakovenko, commissar A. T. Chaykovskiy), the Brigade Soviet Russia (commander, N. V. Bobkov, commissar P. I. Mosalov) and the Brigade imeni P. K. Ponomarenko (commander N. V. Sen'kin, commissar M. Ye. Krishtafovich) from the partisan detachment of Brest Oblast. The brigades conducted intense reconnaissance of the enemy, they transmitted the obtained information to the divisional staffs, they organized ambushes on roads, they attacked retreating enemy columns and assigned groups of partisans for clearing the roads as well as acting as scouts and guides for the advancing subunits. The partisans established, for example, that in the Pashuki--Chernaki area were up to 20 tanks and around 200 infantrymen while on the right bank of the Leska River, the Nazis were carrying out engineer work.<sup>11</sup> Having received such precise intelligence data, the forward units of the 44th Guards Division defeated this enemy grouping, in cooperation with the partisans captured the village of Sherekhuv and then successfully crossed the Western Bug.

In the concluding stage of the Belorussian Operation, the troops of the 65th Army were given significant help by the detachments from the partisan formation of Belostok Oblast (commander V. Ye. Samutin, chief of staff F. F. Kapusta). Thus, on 12 July the Partisan Detachment imeni Bogdan Khmel'nitskiy (commander N. V. Pal'chevskiy, commissar K. A. Kul'tiyasov) straddled the road running from the village of Belavichi to the Guta-Mikhaylovskiy Highway, where the retreating enemy troops were endeavoring to break through. Having taken up the defensive here, the partisans drove off several fierce enemy attacks and the occupied lines until the approach of the forward subunits of the 354th and 69th Rifle Divisions. In this battle they hit 2 tanks, destroyed more than 20 enemy soldiers and officers and captured a great deal of equipment. Soon thereafter the detained grouping was defeated by the arriving main forces of the divisions.

The Partisan Detachment imeni A. Ya. Parkhomenko (commander, A. F. Smirnov, commissar G. A. Oblovatskiy) cooperated actively with the units from the 37th Guards and 15th Rifle Divisions in the Bielsk and Bransk forests. The partisans helped the Soviet soldiers clear the forest of the remnants of scattered enemy units which had settled there and then in cooperating jointly with the forward detachments of the units and formations, led them by the shortest route to the Western Bug and pointed out the most convenient and safest places for crossing the river.

As the southern oblasts of Belorussia were liberated, the units and formations of the 65th Army entered areas where partisan detachments and formations were located and established direct contact with them. The personnel of the partisan detachments which were behind the front line subsequently fought in accord with the instructions of the Belorussian Staff of the Partisan Movement, that is, a larger portion of the partisans joined the ranks of the Soviet Army, a portion was sent to work in the party, soviet and economic institutions of the republic while individual detachments continued operating on Polish territory. Thus, the partisan formations in the southern oblasts of the republic maintained close cooperation with the advancing units of the Soviet Army. The partisans destroyed the enemy lines of communications, they disrupted the work of the enemy operational rear, they supplied the staffs with intelligence data, they helped the units and formations successfully carry out combat missions (they seized crossings and bridges, rebuilt destroyed areas of roads in the rear, they served as guides on unfamiliar terrain and so forth) and together with the troops participated in liberating the towns and population points. In the course of the Bagration Operation, their active operations in the enemy rear helped largely to achieve a high rate of advance and for the 65th Army to successfully carry out the set combat missions.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 422, inv. 10510, file 61, sheets 256-262.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., folio 1128, inv. 1, file 42, sheets 41-53.

<sup>3</sup> P. I. Batov, "V pokhodakh i boyakh" [In Campaigns and Battles], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1974, pp 389-390.

<sup>4</sup> In April 1944, Maj B. M. Chertok, in temporarily visiting the Minsk Partisan Formation, upon a decision of the 65th Army Military Council was left in the formation for providing help and organizing cooperation. In the partisan formation he was appointed to the position of deputy chief of staff for operations.--Eds.

<sup>5</sup> PA IIP pri TsK KPB [Party Archives of the Party History Institute Under the Central Committee of the Belorussian Communist Party], folio 3500, inv. 3, file 82, sheet 45.

<sup>6</sup> TsAMO, folio 233, inv. 2352, file 153, sheet 246.

<sup>7</sup> PO IPP pri TsK KPB, folio 17, inv. 8, file 637, sheet 10.

<sup>8</sup> TsAMO, folio 233, inv. 2352, file 153, sheet 246.

<sup>9</sup> N. Z. Kalinin, "Partizanskaya respublika" [The Partisan Republic], Minsk, Belarus', 1968, pp 361-362.

<sup>10</sup> TsAMO, folio 233, inv. 2352, file 153, sheet 247.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., folio 889, inv. 40856, file 1, sheet 322.

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#### INFORMATION ON NEW MILITARY-RELATED BOOKS REVIEWED

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 7, Jul 84 (signed to press 21 Jun 84) back page

[Unattributed review of new military-related books]

[Text] PANKOV, F. D., "Ognennyye rubezhi" [Fiery Lines], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1984, 248 pages with illustrations, price 70 kopecks.

The military history essay describes the campaign record of the 50th Army during the years of the Great Patriotic War; this army covered itself with undying glory in the defense of Tula, in the liberation of Belorussia and in the storming of Konigsberg.

"Sovetskaya kavaleriya" [Soviet Cavalry], A Military History Essay (A. Ya. Soshnikov, P. N. Dmitriyev, A. S. Arutyunov, et al), Moscow, Voenizdat, 1984, 319 pages, price 1 ruble 20 kopecks.

The work is devoted to the campaign record and heroic actions of the Soviet cavalry from the moment of its birth to the last days of the Great Patriotic War. It tells how the Red Cavalry was organized, grew and became stronger in the battles against the enemies of the socialist motherland, it relates the art and heroism of the cavalry commanders and discloses the courageous and intrepid actions of the Soviet cavalymen, their high moral-combat qualities instilled by the Communist Party.

MATSULENKO, V. A., "Operatsii i boi na okruzheniye. Po opytu Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny" [Operations and Engagements for an Encirclement. From the Experience of the Great Patriotic War], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1983, 231 pages, 16 diagrams, price 1 ruble 10 kopecks.

This military theory work generalizes the experience gained by the USSR Armed Forces in the war years in preparing and conducting encirclement operations and engagements. It examines the questions of planning the operations, breaking through the enemy defenses, pursuit, encirclement and destruction of the enemy, and discloses the trends and patterns in the development of encirclement combat which have not lost their importance under present-day conditions.

GRABOVOY, I. D., KADYUK, V. K., "Zazhigatel'noye oruzhiye i zashchita ot nego" [Incendiary Weapons and Defense Against Them], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1983, 141 pages with illustrations, price 40 kopecks.

The first and second chapters of the book, on the basis of data from foreign sources, examine the state and prospects for the development of incendiary weapons in the NATO armies, the action of curtains of fire as well as the incendiary action of nuclear and other types of weapons on troops, modern means and methods of protecting the troops against incendiary weapons, particular features of their action under conditions of mass fires, heavy smoke, and recommendations are given on organizing firefighting defenses for the troops.

KULESHOV, A. P., "Golubyye molnii" [Blue Lightning], A Novel, Moscow, Voenizdat, 1984, 304 pages, price 1 ruble 60 kopecks.

The book devoted to the life and combat training of airborne troops tells about the history of the reeducating of the young soldier Ruch'yev. The author in his wide-ranging novel also touches on many questions related to the training and indoctrination of airborne troops under conditions close to a combat situation and describes how a close-knit combat collective is formed of men ready at any moment to carry out their sacred duty to the motherland. Inherent to the heroes of the book are the best traits of the Soviet military: patriotism, feelings of comradeship and friendship, and great exactingness for oneself. The book has been awarded the Prize of the USSR Ministry of Defense.

SHAKHURIN, A. I., "Kryl'ya pobedy" [Wings of Victory], Moscow, Politizdat, 1983, 240 pages, price 85 kopecks.

The book by I. A. Shakhurin is designed for a broad range of readers. In it the former USSR people's commissar of the aviation industry has depicted the feat of the working class, the Soviet aviation designers, scientists and all those who during the most difficult time for the Soviet people developed combat air equipment. The author emphasizes that the Soviet Air Forces during the years of the Great Patriotic War received around 137,000 aircraft. Soviet aviation involving an enormous effort by the aircraft builders made a crucial contribution to defeating the enemy air forces which had been declared to be invincible by Nazi propaganda.

VOLKOGONOV, D. A., "Psikhologicheskaya voyna. Podryvnyye deystviya imperializma v oblasti obshchestvennogo soznaniya" [Psychological Warfare. Subversive Actions of Imperialism in the Area of Social Awareness], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1983, 288 pages, price 1 ruble 30 kopecks.

The book describes the psychological warfare centers, apparatus and bodies of the NATO countries, primarily the United States, and of their armed forces, and unmasks the essence, goals and means of this warfare aimed against the USSR and the other socialist countries.

Particular attention is paid to the questions of the development of an ideological offensive against imperialism, hegemonism, militarism and reaction and to indoctrinating in the Soviet people and the personnel of the USSR Armed Forces a moral-political and psychological strength as well as a readiness to resist any ideological subversion.

SALTYKOV, N. D., "Dokladyvayu v General'nyy shtab" [I Report to the General Staff] (Military Memoirs), Moscow, Voenizdat, 1983, 252 pages with illustrations, price 1 ruble 10 kopecks.

The former officer of the General Staff in the operational army, Maj Gen N. D. Saltykov describes the difficult work of the officers who were representatives of the General Staff, their courage and industry. This service was organized during the first months of the Great Patriotic War. The officers inspected the fulfillment of orders from the superior military command, they informed the General Staff of the situation on the front and helped the commanders directly in the field.

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